MODERN REVIEW

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 8 OCTOBER, 1947

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Modern Review, a monthly, is published by the American Labor Conference on International Affairs at 7 East 15th Street, New York 3, N. Y. Subscription: $5 a year; single copy, 60¢. Canada and other foreign countries, $5.75 a year; single copy, 75¢. All payments from foreign countries must be made by U.S. money orders or by checks payable in U.S. currency or 75¢ added for collection charges. Manuscripts are invited. They should be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Payment is at rate of 1¢ a word. Signed contributions do not necessarily represent the policy of *Modern Review* which is open forum in character and encourages complete freedom of expression on the part of its writers. Copyright, 1947, by the American Labor Conference on International Affairs. Application for entry as second-class matter is pending.

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COMMENT

The Piper and the Tune

It all began with Harold Stassen. Some weeks ago this eminent "liberal" who is all out for "internationalism" stated that the United States should aid only those European nations which pledged themselves to refrain from all measures of nationalization. No good free-enterprise money should be spent to finance socialistic experiments.

More recently a distinguished editor-publisher, Mr. William R. Mathews of the Arizona *Daily Star,* after having returned from a study trip to Europe, expressed with commendable candor a thought that haunts many Americans, but which one rarely finds reflected in the New York press. "Money alone will not save Europe. Money alone could be used to sugar-coat the blight of socialism. . . If we are going to pay the piper, we can with propriety insist that we call the tune."

Similar voices, though not always so brutally frank, may be heard today not only in the American press but also in the halls of Congress and in the State Department. Mr. Arthur Krock of the *New York Times,* often a mouthpiece for influential groups in Congress and out, recently devoted two of his columns to the conditions that should be attached to any American credits for Europe. He writes: "Nations whose basic economic recovery is to be assisted by the U.S. must, during the period, suspend political experimentation with systems proclaimed to be hostile to our own."

One might point out that there is something incongruous in the idea that the Marshall plan, allegedly aimed at bolstering democracy and independence in Europe, is to be accompanied by strict conditions on what the nations thus propelled into freedom and democracy are to do if they receive aid. But we have become accustomed to this particular sort of moral schizophrenia which pervades all our political life. An ugly discrepancy between high-sounding moral rectitude and shrewd business sense makes up the main lines of the portrait of America as seen from the other side of the Atlantic. The British, granted a loan and at the same time saddled with concessions to American business interests like "non-

discrimination" and "convertibility of sterling" that made their recovery well-nigh impossible, learned their lesson more than a year ago. So let us talk here a language that may be more easily understood than that of the political moralist.

In Western Europe the majority of governments are committed to some form of nationalization and there is not a single nation there that would be willing or indeed able to return to anything even approaching the free-enterprise system. It is not our purpose to argue here the respective merits of nationalization and free enterprise, but rather to note the fact that the basic philosophy of all but a few remnants of a bygone age in Europe today stands for some kind of controlled economy. To attempt to impose a full swing as a condition of American assistance, as our so-called realists demand, is preposterously utopian. No amount of assistance from the U.S. will make European governments discard Marx and Keynes in favor of Hayek.

The masses of Europe probably care little and know less about the respective merits of economic schools but they are fervently eager to increase their well-being, to break out of the deadly circle of misery and oppression which has bound them for the last two decades. If many of them have turned to Stalinism as a way out, it is because they still hope against hope that an extension of Stalin's Empire to the West would bring about a change in their condition. The reports of the brutal methods of suppression that have seeped out of the Russian occupied parts of Europe, however, have begun to disillusion a part of the European working class. They are attached to their independence and have become vaguely suspicious of a Russia that promises to bring freedom and well-being at the point of a Red Army bayonet.

Those who now claim that the precondition for American aid should be a solemn pledge not to indulge in any political or economic orientation left of center, however, really deserve Stalin's Order of Lenin. No better propagandists for Communism than they now exist. Those who are beginning to be doubtful about the blessings of Stalin's brand of "socialism from above" will certainly prefer even that to Hayek's brand of capitalism imposed under the threat of starvation. You cannot blackmail people into free enterprise!

Independence means the right for any people to decide its own destiny. To attempt to safeguard independence from Russia by in-

fringing upon one of the most essential attributes of independence is not only logically and morally absurd but also bad politics. People may hate those who claim to bring freedom at the point of a bayonet but they will despise those who grant them their wheat and coal only at the price of servitude to the economic gods they serve. No, we cannot afford to insist on calling the tune!

Deadlocked

According to French Foreign Minister Georges Bidault, the Security Council is "the forum . . . where conflicts deepen instead of being calmed and antagonisms become increased instead of disappearing." If M. Bidault is right, the first and only task for the Security Council should be to dissolve. But Bidault is only partially right. It is true that the Security Council is unable to calm conflicts and end antagonisms. That does not necessarily mean, however, that conflicts deepen and antagonisms increase *because* of the Security Council. They are caused by other forces. Perhaps the only useful function of the Security Council is to reveal that the conflicts and antagonisms are very deep and sharp.

Nothing better reveals the farcical character of much of UN proceedings than the recent Security Council action in respect to applications of a number of countries for membership. Russia vetoed Italy, Eire, Transjordan and Portugal; Britain and the U.S. voted against Albania and Outer Mongolia. But there was one nation—apart from Pakistan, admitted as a matter of course—which was admitted without opposition into the great brotherhood of democratic and peace-loving nations: Yemen. Yes, Yemen—the medieval little Arab state, ruled by an absolute monarch, a state in which not even the most elementary human rights are enjoyed or even known to its subjects! Yemen may not be democratic, freedom loving, etc., but it has the signal advantage of not yet having been incorporated into the sphere of influence of any big power. There are few nations that can still qualify for membership under this condition.

Now the General Assembly of the UN is trying to find ways and means of overcoming the crisis revealed by the impasse into which the Security Council has worked itself. There are already several plans, amendments and proposals. Special attention is centered on the veto power of the permanent members of the Council. The

reasons why this problem appears so acute are well-known—at least by every fifth American who, according to the polls, has even heard about the veto. But these reasons were known three years ago when the veto was being discussed and no decision had been taken in relation to it. To discuss the same problem again today seems rather pointless.

Suppose the General Assembly should decide to charge some committee with the duty of studying the question and preparing proposals to be presented at the next session. One does not need to be a prophet to predict what would happen. The committee would elaborate a proposal to change or at least modify the UN Charter in order to eliminate the abuse of the veto power. But the proposal would then have to be approved by the Security Council and at that point Russia would use her power to veto the decision to set limits to the use and abuse of the veto. Without the support of Soviet Russia, the voting procedure cannot be changed; and Russia has made it abundantly clear that she will not permit any change. This vicious circle is inherent in the Charter.

There are those who hope that Soviet Russia may be impressed by "the moral force of world opinion." The proposal to create a permanent committee of the General Assembly seems to be inspired by such ideas. All members of the UN would be represented on this committee which, though lacking power to decide, would discuss questions unsolved by the Security Council and mobilize moral forces in support of just solutions. It is, of course, always good and necessary to mobilize moral forces for a just cause. But why should Russia be more impressed by such mobilization than she has been by the votes against her in the Security Council and on the various committees? Was she impressed when Poland alone sided with her and nine members voted against her? Why should she be more impressed if these numbers should be multiplied by five; i.e., five satellites voting with her with 45 countries voting against? Russia would only see her thesis that she has the support of all "peace loving" peoples confirmed by such a vote.

However, as has been stated above, the mobilization of moral forces is always good and necessary. It may, therefore, be of benefit to prepare and accept some proposals even if their adoption fails to lead to direct, practical results,—*but not at the price that the real conflicts and antagonisms, which cannot be calmed or overcome by revision of the UN Charter or by creation of new committees, be ignored for a moment.*

Some Call It Peace

Five peace treaties were finally ratified by all countries concerned and went into effect on the same day, September 15, 1947. This should be an historic date, but it is not. After September 15, we were no nearer to peace than we were before. It has become usual to speak of the "cold war." There is no doubt that for Soviet Russia the ratification of the peace treaties is a strategic move in the cold war waged by her against her former allies and all countries of Western Europe.

For the near future, the most important effect of the treaties is that within 90 days occupation troops must leave those countries with which peace has been concluded. Practically this means that the Red Army must leave Bulgaria and American and British troops must leave Italy (except for Trieste).

The Red Army will be withdrawing from countries where Soviet Russia no longer needs it. She does not need troops in Bulgaria any longer because the Dimitrov regime is already firmly established. Naturally Russia does not need Allied troops in Italy. But the Red Army will remain in Hungary and Rumania—countries in which Russian military force is still necessary to insure Communist domination. According to the treaties, Russian forces are permitted to remain in Hungary and Rumania to protect Russia's lines of communication with her occupation army in Austria. This situation is to continue until peace is concluded with Austria. Consequently, all that is necessary for Russia to maintain her troops in Hungary and Rumania indefinitely is for her to sabotage the Austrian peace. This she may be expected to do until all opposition in Hungary and Rumania has been crushed and the armies of both countries have been sufficiently staffed with Russian "instructors" to guarantee a "stable" situation from the Russian viewpoint.

In Italy, on the other hand, the allied occupation forces are relatively weak. Nevertheless for the Italian Communists with their "partisan troops," they represent a serious obstacle. Now this obstacle is to be removed.

We are learning to distinguish peace treaties from real peace. By conclusion of a peace treaty, defeated countries are supposed to regain their independence. But Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria lost their independence before the treaties and did not regain it when they went into effect. They remain under Communist (i.e. Russian) domination.

In Hungary the last elections revealed with striking clarity that the regime imposed by Soviet Russia existed against the will of the great majority of Hungarian people. Nothing was changed by the elections, however, and now nothing is changed by the ratification of the treaty. Nor did ratification of the Rumanian or Bulgarian treaties bring more freedom for the people and less persecution for the opposition in those respective countries. It did not prevent the murder of Petkov nor will it prevent murder of other oppositionists in the future.

The Communists alone dare to hail this kind of "peace." For them it existed long before its formal conclusion. Several months ago, William Z. Foster, in his book *The New Europe,* wrote: "A new day for peace has dawned in the Balkans and that whole (Eastern) section of Europe. For decades this area was literally a cockpit of wrangling, warring peoples. But from being a danger spot to world peace it is now becoming a solid buttress of international peace."

If there is any peace in Eastern Europe, it is the peace of the cemetery. The dawn of real peace has yet to come.

GUEST EDITORIAL

Ways To Fight the Taft-Hartley Act

J. C. Rich

Of the several ways to fight the Taft-Hartley Act, the one chosen by John L. Lewis seems to have gained the loudest round of applause and the least amount of support from labor's ranks. His veto of the AFL Executive Council's obvious willingness to sign the non-Communist affidavit demanded by NLRB Counsel Robert N. Denham was a stimulating example of labor's innate militancy. The fact that he had to browbeat nine-tenths of the leadership into demonstrating this example, shows that the responsible heads of organized labor feel constrained to temper their militancy with practical considerations. Much like their British brethren with the Trades Union Disputes Act of 1926, America's labor leadership was in

J. C. RICH is editor of the *Hat Worker,* monthly publication of the United Hatters, Cap and Millinery Workers International Union (AFL).

favor of compliance with the Taft-Hartley Act. Despite the emotional flourishes with which Lewis' intransigence was received, the sentiment in the labor community, both AFL and CIO, is still in favor of compliance with the formalities of the law. For as any practical minded labor organizer will tell you in perfect New Yorkese: "You can't fight City Hall." You can evade, bypass, frustrate or even win it over and dominate it, but you can't fight the Government head on, they will say. Mr. Lewis must have taught this object lesson to labor by a well-remembered comeuppance at the hands of the Presidency and the Supreme Court.

The issue on which Denham and Lewis took their stand has all the sardonic flavor of a Gilbert and Sullivan sequence. Mr. Lewis, who hates the Communists with a Homeric hate, refuses to state that he is not a Communist. Mr. Denham, who attaches personal ferocity to his task of censor of labor's snow white purity, won't permit the entirely kosher AFL anywhere near the National Labor Relations Board until Lewis does. Mr. Denham says that nobody can convince him that he is wrong. Mr. Lewis says that he hopes Mr. Denham is right and to hell with him, anyway. The Mikado's Lord High Executioner and Pinafore's Monarch of the Seas are thus doing a duo on the tom-toms with the Gentlemen of Japan and all the Sisters, Cousins and their Aunts joining in a rousing curtain chorus. Any moment now the CIO's Buttercup will chime in and the comedy will be complete.

Mr. Denham's insistence on protocol has elicited some dyspeptic hiccups from even such a decorous gentleman as Mr. Taft. The Senator has let the icewater tap run with frigid eloquence to the effect that maybe there has been a misapprehension as to the meaning of the law. The thing that bothers Mr. Taft, as it does all who concocted the Taft-Hartley melange, is that it will be left to curdle on the window-sill for the delectation of hoboes and bottle flies. If both the AFL and the CIO ignore the Taft-Hartley law, the question is asked, who will be left to observe it?

The answer obviously is that the unaffiliated unions will take advantage of it. What bothers the labor people is that there are some awful buzzards among the so-called unaffiliated organizations. Whether by ignorance or with malice aforethought, the sponsors of the Taft-Hartley Act have so designed their masterpiece as to favor every scabrous and disreputable element in the industrial community. The company unions, the crows and birds of prey of the labor

flock, will swoop down to pick the field clean, Mr. Denham and the National Labor Relations Board acting as guides and shelters for them. Mr. Denham, who is himself way out on a limb with his demand of a silly statement of purity from the AFL (and the CIO), will be constrained to shoo the scavengers onto labor's sown fields in order to wreak spite and vengeance for the predicament in which he finds himself. The fact that the predicament is of his own making will make no difference, however, so far as organized labor is concerned. The havoc in its ranks and in the standards of living it has gained for the American people will be incalculable.

It is this practical consideration and not a sudden surge of affection for the Taft-Hartley concoction that has moved most labor men in their attitudes toward the new law. There is not a leader and hardly a rank and file member among the trade unions who does not consider the law a work of spite and malice. There is not a union that has not formulated ways and means to continue its activity and protect the interests of its membership despite the law. Evade, avoid, fight the law they will, but ignore it they cannot, for whatever they may do to the contrary, the law will not ignore them. There are sanctions and penalties in the law that will make an open and categoric defiance of its multifarious provisions a risky and costly undertaking. Observance of the law will not completely eliminate the risk and cost, but will certainly reduce them.

Only the most powerful unions and those in specially favored positions feel that they can afford a head-on contest with the law. These, and the Communist dominated organizations which have no alternative in any case, are therefore the ones that can indulge in the dramatics of defiance. Mr. Lewis may hurl such thunderbolts as "cowards" and "weaklings" at those who filed their disclaimers of Communism with the Labor Board, but it is not pusillanimousness that moved them to sign the galling documents. The majority in the AFL signed because they feel that they cannot accept the Lewis battle strategy. "Let the weak fall," said Brother Lewis, but the weak have the nasty habit of disliking to die for the benefit of the strong. The tradition of the labor movement has been that the strong have helped the weak and not the other way about.

To date neither the AFL nor the CIO have developed a plan of action that will defend the unions, weak or strong, against the aggressions of the Taft-Hartley law when it develops its operations in full swing. Neither of these federative bodies is financially en-

dowed or sufficiently armed for total war. Only a few of the labor allies are themselves strong enough to bear the brunt of battle. The little unions, those without huge treasuries and those which are still in process of unionizing their industries, fear that when the firing gets hot they will be without shelter or support.

It would have put much more courage and fighting stamina into the general run of unions if the Executive Council of the AFL, Lewis to the forefront, instead of saying, "Let the weak fall" had said: "Come on, guys. We're all in it together. If the industrial totalitarians invade your territory, we'll back you up. We'll give you men, we'll give you money to fight the Taft-Hartley abomination through all the courts of the land. Your fight is ours even more than it is yours." Had such a declaration come out of the meeting at which Lewis is reported to have stormed that it is "unsafe to criticize the president of the United Mine Workers," it would have given the president of the United Mine Workers an infinitely greater acceptance of his plan of action, if such a plan there be.

In the absence of a general and coordinated line of action, the unions have been forced to adopt plans of their own, most of them makeshift operations. Every union has informed its locals and field organizers to be most circumspect. Organizing work in new territories, always beset with great difficulty, will now meet almost insuperable obstacles. The depressed and substandard portions of industry will now be able to make even greater competitive inroads on the unionized portions. That will be the long range effect of the Taft-Hartley law which is supposed to "equalize" the relations between labor and management. The equalization will be at the expense of labor and that portion of industry which accepts its obligations of social responsibility. But arguing this point of social husbandry with the promulgators of the Taft-Hartley Act is like debating the finer points of a Brahms symphony with a Hottentot.

With all that, the situation is not entirely hopeless. The fact that Big Industry—steel, motors, rubber—was not alone constrained but even eager to disdain the Taft-Hartley law is significant. If big industry shies away from the white elephant with such obvious disfavor for the gift, what do the Taft-Hartley protagonists imagine will happen to their monstrosity when labor gets to work on it? That labor will do so, Denham or no Denham, Communist affidavits or no affidavits, is both obvious and inevitable. We may be in for a siege of bootleg industrial relations in this country, but Mr. Taft's brand of prohibition will ultimately go the way of the Volstead Act.

VOICE OUT OF RUSSIA

EDITOR'S NOTE: *This is perhaps one of the most significant reports to come out of postwar Russia — significant not because of any sensational revelations but because of the amazing degree to which it confirms the basic picture that experts have been piecing together bit by bit from a wide variety of sources.*

We are not at liberty, of course, to give any detailed account of how this manuscript was secured. To do so would spell death for its author. This much, however, can be said. The writer is a prominent Soviet specialist. He also happened to be an old school mate of a non-Russian who has recently visited the USSR. The article, while it developed out of what began as an informal conversation — which accounts for its somewhat informal tone — was dictated directly at the end of this conversation. It was not ghost-written nor is it one of those "as told to" stories reconstructed after the event.

In American you seem well informed about the outward manifestations of our life: about the prices of commodities, our housing problem, famine and misery, about our lawlessness — including details of our concentration camps that are known only to a very limited circle of Russians. But you seem to be hazy about basic matters: the nature of our regime, the essence of our society, our psychology and aspirations.

This is apparently the reason you talk about Socialism, Communism or Marxism in Soviet Russia. All this talk is beside the point. Above all, tell those who call our system "communistic" that they are completely wrong. There is not and cannot be any Communism in Russia. There is a dictatorship more brutal than any of its predecessors. Inequality is even greater than it was in prerevolutionary Russia. Few people have a decent standard of living; they constitute but a small fraction of one percent. Even passable circumstances are the lot of only a few. The mass of the population lives in abject misery and very many are starving. Hunger is creating havoc. Even if the harvest is good, the problem will not be solved. We need three or four super-abundant yields before bread will become plentiful. In this, the "land of workers and peasant," the classes that suffer most are these very workers and peasants.

Workers and Peasants

The workers live from hand to mouth. Perhaps five percent among them are in favor of the Soviet regime. Many workers earn 400 rubles a month. A kilogram of meat costs 100 rubles, a kilogram of bread 40 to 50 rubles, etc. The black market is having a field day. Black market goods come from stores, cooperatives, etc. Everybody steals.

In the villages you find no young men. It is not an exaggeration to say that only women, children and old people have remained in the villages. Every morning the chairman of the *kolkhoz* (collective farm) makes his tour and drives the villagers out to work. Even before the war, young men were anxious to leave the *kolkhozes,* and make a fresh start in the towns. Many perished in the war (the official figure of losses must be increased many-fold). Others simply disappeared. Still others have managed to gain a foothold in the towns. Among the peasants you find no supporters of the Soviet regime. *Kolkhoz* peasants are the poorest sector of the population, they are positively paupers. With the downfall of the Soviet regime the *kolkhozes* will break up spontaneously.

The Intellectuals

A third element of our "socialist" society is the intelligentsia, which is very different from the intelligentsia of pre-revolutionary Russia. We have brilliant specialists, but few men of broad general culture. Least of all does one find such men among the Communists. It is not to the party intelligentsia that the nation owes its achievements. These must be credited to non-party men, among whom I reckon those who, while possessing a party membership card (often indispensable for getting or keeping a job), have nothing in common with the Communist ideology and morals. Paradoxical as it may seem, the regime is assisted most by people who hate or at least dislike it. They are capable of creative work precisely because their spirit is not harnessed under a party yoke. The Communists never create, they can only copy or implement. This is not to say that there are no intelligent people among party members, but they are deprived of freedom of thought. They are blindfolded —education, party discipline and petty supervision destroy their creative faculties and even receptiveness to new ideas in any domain.

This explains why many prominent specialists, like Ramzin,[1]

[1]A Russian industrial engineer and victim of one of the earliest purge trials.

instead of being executed, have been pardoned and reinstated in their leading posts; they sometimes even receive awards and are placed in privileged conditions, though their anti-Soviet sentiment is generally known. The regime simply cannot dispense with their services. And these people, by their education or culture, have an inner aversion to dishonest work. The result is that men who hate the regime or have personally suffered from it become the nation's brains directed toward the strengthening of that same regime. Ramzin long ago resumed his lectures at Moscow University, and A. N. Tupolev (airplane constructor) is also working in his field.

What Price Industrialization?

We have made great technical progress, especially recently. All foreign inventions and innovations are being acquired immediately, either by official purchase, by corrupting engineers, workers and employes, or by way of espionage. Soviet agents are numerous among nationals of all countries. Sometimes they do not know whom they serve. Models obtained in this manner are studied by specialists and copied with slight variations. Many German specialists, under supervision of course, are now working on top-secret projects. Near Moscow experiments have recently been carried out with super-speed airplanes. It is rumored that they have attained the fantastic speed of over 2,000 miles an hour. I do not vouch for this figure, and I do not know whether these planes are operated by pilots or automatically. But it is a fact that tremendous success has been achieved in aviation. Communists assert that we need no longer fear the atomic bomb.

It is often asked if Russian industry could have made such strides without the Bolsheviks. I think that the scope and speed of industrialization accomplished under Stalin could not have been achieved by any other government. No honest government, pursuing the best interests of the people, would ever subject them to such sacrifices and suffering. It may be that another government would have found less bloody ways for the development of our economy. Perhaps by attracting foreign capital, it would have alleviated the birth pangs of Russian industrialization.

Another question is whether this industrialization was necessary. Opinions may differ on this score. I personally think it was necessary. True, industrialization was built on the bones and blood of the Russian people, but it has now been accomplished. We erected it with untold labor, suffering, sweat and blood. No nation

except ours could have completed that task. We invested in our industry all we had—our wealth, the people's welfare, our toil, and genuine creative enthusiasm. Now we take pride in it.

Are all these sacrifices to come to nothing? We toiled honestly for our country. We gave it our dearest and best. Let those who are prone to pass judgment on us for having given our services to the Soviet regime be mindful of the fact that what we did was not for the Soviet but for future Russia, in which we believe and shall continue to believe no matter what happens.

At the present moment we are in a difficult position. Our capital has been spent and the nation bled white. We are out of breath, and cannot continue to work with the old gusto. We are prepared to thank heaven if the present five-year plan brings us to the level of 1940. And to make both ends meet in 1940 was exceedingly difficult.

In the first place our trouble is due to the wasteful methods of industrialization which have exhausted the nation's material and human stock. It is aggravated by the "long-range policy" pursued by the dictatorship, i.e., the policy of conquest and preparation for a new world war. This policy diverts tremendous potentialities from economic rehabilitation to objectives alien to the people's interests. Our poor and devastated country, in which millions live in such circumstances as can scarcely be imagined by the outside world, is unable to raise the standard of living and at the same time to spend uncounted billions on armaments and hazardous adventures. Our despoliation of the occupied countries cannot make good the vast expenses.

This anti-popular and anti-national policy is thrust upon Russia by the dictatorship. Our urgent historical task consists in abolishing the existing regime. Outsiders call it a regime of Communist domination. That is wrong. Russia is ruled neither by the Communist Party nor by the Supreme Soviet.

Communist Party and Secret Police

It is generally known that elections to the Supreme Soviet are fake. No one ever dares to nominate a candidate. Candidates are nominated by the party alone and are then approved "unanimously" (just try not to approve!). They are elected "unanimously," too. Though the elections are supposed to be secret, nobody has the courage to cross out the name of a candidate. (Suppose this somehow became known!) Participation in elections is not only manda-

tory in principle, but is actually enforced. Officials in charge of the elections are held responsible for everybody having "voted."

A current anecdote correctly describes the functions of the Supreme Soviet:

The Supreme Soviet has gathered and is waiting for Stalin. At last he appears. "Are all present?" he asks. They are. "Have you sung the anthem?" They have. "All right, then you can go home." The session is closed.

Nor is Russia ruled by the Communist Party. Stalin and Molotov—not the Politburo—are the sole masters of the USSR. On all important issues Molotov, of course, consults Stalin. Each of them has reliable confidants, but their influence is negligible, and they depend on Stalin completely. The Politburo plays an important but not decisive role. Nothing can be set on foot without Stalin's approval. It is generally taken for granted that he is the originator and sponsor of all things. This sometimes borders on the ridiculous. Even a new book, a scientific work, a new invention cannot come into being without Stalin's blessing.

It seems strange that this constant eulogizing does not sicken even Stalin. But here is a fact. Once he appeared in the Great Theatre. The audience rose to their feet and cheered. Stalin then exclaimed: "Long live the Party of Lenin and Stalin!"

By what means is the regime, bitterly hated by the majority, kept at the helm? It is impossible to give a complete description of the power machine even in a long conversation or article—several books would be needed. Physical coercion is combined with subtle methods of propaganda and moral and economic pressure. The instrument of physical coercion is MGB, Ministry of State Security, the former NKVD or GPU.

One must not think of MGB in terms of the cursed Cheka under Dzerzhinsky. That was a group of party fanatics who stained their hands with blood for the greater glory of the Revolution. MGB is an organization of officials executing orders in an unimpassioned, business-like fashion. Millions of lives are being sacrificed in the same impersonal assembly-line way in which automobiles are produced, and on the basis of a thorough division of labor among the various "workshops." MGB consists of a number of "autonomous" divisions.

The employes of each division do their work unconcerned with and often unaware of what is going on in the other divisions. The agents report, the informers inform, the appropriate official issues

orders for arrest, somebody executes the order, and the prosecutor accuses. He must make good the accusation by all means. Once a man has been arrested, he must be convicted. The prosecutor may have on hand a score of cases which he is expected to conclude, say within a week or ten days; he will be careful to observe the deadline. For this purpose he uses the well known methods. His failure to accuse an arrested man would be taken as lack of cooperation with the officials of the preceding level, and this would be sure to antagonize them. Therefore he will do his best to secure a conviction. This prosecutor cannot be compared with the government attorney in the normal meaning of this term. This is why it is practically impossible to shake off the grip of the MGB once you are caught in it.

The MGB is in charge of political offences only, which cover wrecking acts, sabotage, counter-revolution, so-called treason against the homeland, etc. In Moscow MGB has three prisons, among them Butyrki and Lubianka. They are crowded with political prisoners, "socially harmful" and unreliable elements. Common criminals come under the jurisdiction of criminal courts. There you can find attorneys with legal training. Such persons are rare on the MGB staff, which is handpicked and receives a very special "education."

The People In Wartime

There is nothing new in all that. It may only be new insofar as after the war everything has remained as of old or has taken a turn for the worse.

Nobody (except a very small privileged group) likes the regime. Many abhor it. It continues in power mainly by the prolific use of terrorism and espionage. Before the war, we estimated that in a party of six one was sure to be an NKVD agent; today the ratio is 1 to 4. This spread of espionage is facilitated by the prevailing hunger. Nobody has confidence in the government. Should it now decide to permit private trade (some steps are being made in that direction), nobody would venture to engage in such trade for fear of future reprisals. Heart-to-heart talks are possible only within very limited circles. One hesitates to confide even in ones own family.

During the war there was hope for betterment. Many placed faith in the Atlantic Charter, on Roosevelt and Churchill. Actually, the situation is now worse than it was in 1939.

Early in the war the majority of the populace bet on the Germans to win. It is heart-rending to admit it, but it is a fact. The assertion that it was Stalin's strategy and the efforts of the Com-

munist Party that beat the Germans is hokum. The Germans marched to the Volga meeting almost no resistance. Hundreds of thousands surrendered, and the people often welcomed the Germans with flowers as liberators. But when they showed their real face, their meanness, brutality and contempt for the Russians, then the very people who had offered them flowers, resorted to any weapons they could lay their hands on and drove the Germans out.

The Russian strongly resents any encroachment upon his dignity; the revolution has stimulated this sentiment so that even the Soviet regime, with all its villainy, never dares humiliate the people, though it scoffs at the intelligentsia. The government and Stalin in due time recognized the import of this change of heart, and helped the people by providing them with leaders and technical means. Incidentally, the part played by the people in the last war was much more important than is usually assumed. Historically, though not technically, this part was more important than that of the army. The army did its job later, after 1942, though even than it could have accomplished nothing without the people's assistance. The Germans were thrown out of Russia by the Russian people — and by their own crimes.

What Now?

Today hunger and apathy prevail, and hope has faded. Evolution toward democracy and freedom is out of the question, and so is revolution against the regime. I have been told that people abroad expect a conflict may break out between Stalin and the army. A conflict of this kind actually took place during the war when a part of the army under General Vlasov turned against Stalin—and joined the Germans. Even now many people sympathize with Vlasov. The fact that he rose against Stalin is what most matters to them. After the Vlasov experience Stalin and the party were on their guard. They took timely measures, and also protected themselves against returning war prisoners, many of whom had seen Europe.

In the army older officers are gradually being replaced by new men. Today a commander of a regiment must be a graduate of the Military Academy. The new commanders are young men well trained in Communist ideology, devoted to the party and the regime. They receive good pay—10 to 12 thousand rubles a month, and enjoy various privileges. As everywhere, a purge is also being carried out in the army.

Of the returning war prisoners a part come back to their fam-

ilies after thorough "shifting," another part is in the army, and many have just "vanished." Stalin is supposed to have committed a major blunder in mistreating the former prisoners of war. It really makes no difference. Whatever he does now, the Russian people will never forgive him for what he did earlier. He knows that prisoners who have seen another life will always be witnesses against him. Therefore, they are his enemies, and hence "enemies of the people." In this, as in everything else, Stalin remains consistent.

For various reasons including the effect abroad, persecution of the Church was stopped in wartime. In Moscow there are now four churches, and they are always overflowing. The upkeep of the churches is expensive, since in addition to taxes, they must pay palm-oil to avoid trouble. In the villages there are practically no churches. The religious seminary in Moscow attracts few students—not because believers are few, but because nobody trusts the government. Persecution may start again any time.

If an evolution of the government is impossible and a revolution against it is also impossible—where are we heading? We are heading for war. Nobody here wants war. Nobody has the strength or stamina to go through the horrors of war again. But what can the Soviet people do, gagged and downtrodden as they are?

The Coming War

It is well not to cherish any illusions on this score. War will break out—not now, but in two or three years, perhaps somewhat later. America and Britain can do nothing to avert it. Even if they accept the entire list of Stalin's demands concerning the Balkans, the Dardanelles and Asia, Stalin will present new demands and with even more impudence.

Stalin's formidable propaganda machine will continue to be directed toward hammering into Russian heads the idea that "foreign capitalists," "reactionaries" and "fascists" are girding for war against Russia and the Russian people; that, like Hitler, they are plotting the invasion of Russia, her dismemberment and spoiliation, and a new form of foreign slavery. Since many burned their fingers on Hitler, and paid for it dearly, this propaganda may become effective. It is of utmost importance that America dispel such doubts, and make it clear by deeds, not just by words, that she is hostile to Stalin's regime, but friendly to the Russian people, and that she has never contemplated any interference in our domestic affairs.

Since Stalin's aggression is sure to continue, America will soon have to grapple with problems of political, as well as military, strategy. By a false approach and misunderstanding of Russian psychology, America may alienate our people and turn them, as in Hitler's time, into involuntary allies of the regime. But as yet America is still very popular in this country.

I do not know how it can be done, but something must be undertaken to inject faith into our people who have lost heart, and to help them overcome their apathy. They must gain the assurance that they have friends who are worried about their future. And they must gain a clear idea what to do when the decisive hour strikes.

In this respect democratic Russian refugees may prove helpful. I do not know much about them, but I think that an important task is incumbent on them. They are probably best qualified to make it clear to public opinion abroad that Stalin's totalitarianism has no greater enemy than the Russian people, and that therefore in the future war the Russians will side with America against the regime. Furthermore, they must bring home to the nations where they live the importance of a correct, far-sighted and democratic policy toward Russia—before, during and after the coming war. If this policy succeeds in convincing the Russians that their freedom and independence are not menaced by foreign nations, then the future may still hold out hope for all of us.

PHILOSOPHY AND THE AMERICAN TEMPER

Ernest Nagel

A nation committed to a democratic way of life, but which prescribes for its citizens a set of beliefs concerning the nature of the cosmos and man's place in it, is a contradiction in terms. When permitted to reflect freely upon fundamental questions, men are stimulated to thought by diverse experiences and divergent traditions; and under these circumstances the world comes to be viewed from many different perspectives and portrayed in many different colors. But the freedom to develop alternative conceptions of nature and man, even though some of them may be grossly inadequate to their subject matter, is an essential part of the liberal, democratic tradition. There is accordingly no official American philosophy.

Nor is there, contrary to the tales repeated by many foreign observers, any unique American philosophy, stemming from native seed, nourished exclusively by native soil, and flowering in all but lonely profusion in all parts of the land. Only unfamiliarity with the variety of doctrines professed by academic teachers and reflective men of letters in America, or inability to resist an impulse for popular caricature, can produce such a claim. Ever since the settlement of the American continent, the commerce of ideas between it and Europe has been continuous, and the fundamental beliefs and habits of mind of American intellectuals have always been swayed by winds of doctrine coming from foreign shores. Even those modes of thought which have often been identified as distinctively American (for example, Puritanism, New England Transcendentalism, and Pragmatism) are historically related to intellectual movements which have flourished across the Atlantic—to British Deism and Empiricism, to the many varieties of German Philosophical Idealism, and to French Positivism and Voluntarism. There is at least a grain of truth in the witticism that philosophies which become moribund in Europe obtain a second lease upon life when transplanted to America. In any event, it is not possible to cite a type of philosophy current in America which has not its identical counterpart, or at least its unmistakable analogue, in other countries.

ERNEST NAGEL, one of America's best known younger philosophers, is Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University.

It would indeed be strange if it were otherwise. For although the political and social experience of America has in many respects been unique, contemporary America shares with western Europe a comparable literary and religious heritage, a similar social and economic structure, and above all an identical science. Geographical distance does not by itself produce differences in fundamental attitudes and beliefs. There is, to be sure, scarcely any evidence for the widespread view that systems of philosophy, like other manifestations of the human spirit, are simply the "reflections" of the prevailing economic structure of a society, and that there is therefore a point-to-point correspondence between the history of ideas and the socio-economic changes in the life of a people. But even in its most abstract reaches philosophy is surely a commentary upon experience, so that men steeped in similar cultural traditions and confronted with similar materials for reflections will in general adopt comparable modes of viewing their place in the world.

Nevertheless, when proper qualifications are made, it is not untrue to claim that a certain habit of mind and a set of general convictions characterize the writings of many professional philosophers in America which contrast sharply with the temper and the content of much foreign thought. But one must hasten to add that these convictions also contrast sharply with many intellectual currents long and firmly established in the country, as well as with recent importations that promise to acquire a wide following: with the still influential survivals of the once dominant Calvanistic theologies; with the rosy-hued philosophies of progress, which for a time replaced these latter in popular favor and which continue to exercise a hold on many contemporary minds; with the current revivals of the Augustinian emphasis on the inherent sinfulness of man, and with the many calls to salvation through renunciation of wordly effort; with absolute idealism in its many forms, still not without defenders among the older generation of philosophers as well as among the younger ones; with a militant Thomism, which in recent years has acquired vigorous camp-followers in lay seats of learning; with phenomenology, stimulated to lush growth by the recent influx of European scholars; and with *Existenzphilosophie,* suddenly fashionable in literary circles because of French influence, though at the moment without energetic advocates among professional philosophers.

An adequate portrayal of the contemporary American scene

would have to give more than incidental mention to these contrasting currents of thought. If they receive but scant notice in the present account, it is because the movement in philosophy to be briefly described appears to express more adequately than any of these the dominant temper of American life. For it is a movement which is profoundly influenced by the achievements of both theoretical and applied science, and which makes its largest appeal to a people filled with a sturdy faith in the power of intelligent thought and action to solve the problems besetting mankind. Without being narrowly practical-minded or philistine in its loyalties, without undervaluing the liberalizing functions of art, contemplative reflection and theoretical inquiry, it voices a frankly "this-worldly" philosophy. It expresses the aspirations of a people still young enough to believe that the good life can be achieved through an overt participation in worldly affairs, rather than through a melancholy resignation. It subscribes to the view that the things most dear to mankind are brought into existence and are sustained in their functions by natural forces; and it therefore finds only a romantic sentimentalism in the conception according to which men are wanderers in an inherently hostile world who must take their directions from supernatural guides. It counts among its adherents a number of the older generation of philosophers, but it also prides itself on the fact that it has the vigorous support of many of the keenest and best disciplined minds among the younger men. It is without question America's most significant contribution to philosophic intelligence.

This philosophy has been variously designated as objective relativism, functional realism, contextualism, naturalism, and process philosophy. Its central conceptions concerning man and nature have sometimes been identified with the pragmatism or instrumentalism of Peirce, James, Mead and Dewey. This identification is both mistaken and misleading. Although contextualistic naturalism has historical roots in pragmatism, and although Dewey himself is an exponent of both, those professing the former do not in general feel committed to the technical pragmatic doctrines concerning the nature of truth or the function of knowledge, and in the main they have no liking for the pragmatic or instrumentalist label. Indeed, the specific pragmatic conceptions propounded by James and Dewey, which caused such a flurry of excitement in the first quarter of the present century, now appear to be of little more than historical in-

terest to the younger generation of American philosophers—in part, no doubt, because the intellectual storm raised by those conceptions has cleared the air of the traditional complacencies and barren self-deceptions against which pragmatism was a protest. Unlike contextualistic naturalism, it is problematic whether, except in some training schools for teachers and in centers of learning where the personal influence of the founders of pragmatism is still alive, pragmatism retains the expansive dynamism of a growing movement. Nonetheless, pragmatism is the matrix out of which, at least in America, contextualistic naturalism has emerged. For certain features of pragmatic philosophy that had been subordinated to its theory of truth and knowledge, have subsequently received an independent development; and fortified by fresh analyses of scientific method as well as by the findings of biological inquiry, they have been forged into a distinctive outlook upon man and nature.

Contextualistic naturalism is not a finished intellectual edifice, and perhaps it will never develop into one. Though much periodical literature indicates whence and whither it is tending, there certainly is no one treatise that could be cited as the *Summa* of its doctrines. However, many of the later writings of John Dewey, W. H. Sheldon's *America's Progressive Philosophy,* and various essays in the recent collection entitled *Naturalism and the Human Spirit* (edited by Y. H. Krikorian) contain at least its basic ground plan. Those out of sympathy with it are likely to judge it as eclectic, loose-jointed, and at a number of essential points even distressingly vague. But those who subscribe to its main tenets believe that a working philosophy cannot be more tidy and architechtonically complete than the subjects of which it treats.

For a cardinal thesis of contextualistic naturalism is the essentially incomplete but fundamentally plural character of existence, in which no overarching pattern of development can be discerned, and in which qualititative discontinuities and loose conjunctions are as ultimate features as are firm connections and regular cycles of change. Events are recognized to have causes and consequences, without beginning and without preordained end. But though events are genuinely related to other events, they are not related to all events in the same way, not everything is relevant to the occurrence of everything else, and no events are related to others by logical necessity. Indeed, things may be caught up in some eddy of the flux of change which can alter their customary modes of behavior and

transform them in a manner not always deducible from the known conditions of their normal existence. Novelty, contingency, and alternative possibilities of development, are accordingly basic features of nature. The disciplined human perspective upon the flux of events does not betray its observers, and the mixture of direction and chaos which that perspective reveals is not the superficial appearance of a fixed plan working itself out with inexorable logic.

In consequence, contextualistic naturalists exhibit a profound distrust of philosophic systems which attempt to catch once for all the variegated contents of the world in a web of dialectical necessity. They are keenly conscious of the limitations of purely formal analysis even when they engage in it. For they recognize that a logic, no matter how subtle, provides no warrant concerning matters of fact unless it is supported by controlled observation. Indeed, they sometimes show an almost pathological fear that those concerned with formal analysis may be deceived into supposing that nature is as coherently organized and as simple as are their intellectual constructions.

Nor does the familiar distinction between appearance and reality play any role in their thinking about nature, since the term "reality" designates no inherently basic substance in the world but at best only a humanly valuable phase of existence. Accordingly, every quality and event is a genuine occurrence in some complex process or context, and possesses ascertainable relations and functions in that context. There is, however, no one context which is relevant to the occurrence of everything, there is no absolutely privileged context. It is this emphasis upon the contextual conditions for the occurrence and for the manifested properties of everything whatsoever—upon the fact that a quality is an objective constituent of nature even though its existence depends on the relations in which it stands to other things—which explains the adjective in the label "contextualistic naturalism."

It is inevitable that on these assumptions contextualistic naturalism should be vigorously anti-reductionist. Unlike earlier forms of naturalism, it maintains that the world contains at least as many qualitatively distinct features as are disclosed in human experience, and not a fewer number of them. The widespread view exemplified in such claims as that the playing of a Bach *Chaconne* is "nothing but" a scraping of horsehair across catgut, or that the human scene is "nothing but" an aggregation of certain allegedly "ultimate"

elements, is therefore rejected as resting upon patent confusions. Modern physics and modern biopsychology are taken seriously by contextualistic naturalists, and current theories concerning the electrical structure of matter and the biophysical basis of human action are assumed to be well-grounded in competent evidence. But they fail to see any merit in the argument according to which, simply because complex organizations of the elementary particles of modern physics constitute the conditions for the occurrence of familiar events and processes, the characteristic behaviors of such complex wholes are indistinguishably identical with the behaviors of their differently organized parts.

It follows that the human scene is as much an integral part of nature, and as valid a subject for the philosopher's concern with basic features of existence, as is any of its other sectors. As contextualistic naturalism views them, man and his works are not inexplicable occurrences, incomparable in every respect with other natural processes. Men come into being and act the way they do only because of the operations of natural forces, and they perish or cease to behave as men when forces no less natural disrupt the normal organization of their bodies and of their fields of behavior. On the other hand, though the conditions of man's life are thus continuous with the rest of nature, his behavior exhibits features which are discontinuous with other parts of existence. For man is not simply another odd item in the inexhaustible catalogue of created things. He possesses the apparently unique gift of an inquiring mind, which enables him not only to act under the compulsion of internal springs of action and external pressures, but also to direct his impulses and to master many of the forces in his environment.

This gift of intelligence man owes to the organization of his body and the character of his environment, and no supernatural agency or disembodied soul is required to explain it. It is this organization, complicated by the structure of his surroundings, which also accounts for men's moral and evaluative behaviors. The possession of needs and preferences, and the exercise of reflection upon them in the interest of fulfilling and harmonizing them, are as natural to man as is, for example, the property of a magnet to repel or attract another magnet. In any event, it is in the radical plurality of men's needs and in the limitations which their physical and social environment impose upon their fulfillment, that contextualistic naturalism locates the source and urgency of moral problems. Accordingly, it

does not conceive the primary moral problem to be that of discovering or actually instituting some fixed set of ethical norms valid everywhere and for all time. For basic moral problems are plural in number and specific in character, and are concerned with the adjustment, in the light of causes and consequences, of competing impulses occurring in specific environmental contexts. There can therefore be no general or final solution to the moral predicaments of mankind; the moral problem is the perennial one of finding ways and means for eliminating needless suffering and for organizing in a reasonable manner the energies of men.

The advocacy of a responsible intellectual method, especially in matters pertinent to social and ethical issues as well as in philosophy, is thus an emphatic strain in the writings of contextualistic naturalists. For reliable knowledge is the end-product of a reflective process, involving the use of experimental controls over ideas which initially have the status of tentative hypotheses; and it is this procedure which must be employed if reliable knowledge and reasonable evaluations are to be attained in the settlement of social and moral conflicts. This method of science supplies no guarantees against error, it does not preclude alternative solutions to problems, and it certifies none of its conclusions as eternally valid. But since it is in essence a self-corrective method, and involves the continued criticism of its findings in the light of evidence capable of public inspection, it is a method which can discover its own errors. It is in any case the sole method which has historically shown itself able to yield intellectual and practical mastery over various segments of nature. From the systematic extension of the use of this method to the problems of men, contextualistic naturalists confidently anticipate an increased moral enlightenment.

Compared with many fashionable philosophies contextualistic naturalism is almost prosaically sober. It contributes to the current intellectual scene no apocalyptic visions, no thunderous absolutes, no unshakeable certainties. It offers no spectacular promises of salvation. It is essentially scientific and secular in temper, but confident that the concentration of scientific methods upon specific problems will yield a rich harvest of genuine knowledge. It is sane and reasonable at a time when the tides of irrationalism run high in the world and when substitutes for the Appolonian virtues are at a premium. It expresses the convictions of a people confident that a bold but disciplined intelligence is still a creative power in the world.

THREE GENERATIONS OF SPANIARDS

Victor Alba

At the beginning of this century, Spain, her highways and byways thronged with mutilated soldiers returning from lost Cuba and forced to ask for charity as the government gave them no help, heard at last one voice that did not talk of the grandeur of Spain's past but rather of its present, and demanded, with that erudite passion which is the basis of Spanish thought, "a double turn of the keys at the sepulcher of the Cid and a policy of schools and pantries." The man who called for this program was Joaquin Costa—and his attempt was in vain. Yet his generation finally triumphed 35 years later. These men, whose group is called "the generation of '98," were impressed by the anxieties and uncertainties of the Spanish national scene during the epoch in which the last islands of the Spanish Empire were lost. They were disgusted by party politics—liberals and conservatives always succeeding each other in power without any appreciable change—madly in love with progress and completely out of touch with social problems. These were the Ortega y Gassets, the Azanas, Unamunos, Machados, Maragalls, Angel Ganivets—all enemies of Don Quixote in whom they saw the representative of a feudal Spain which they despised—but of which they also knew that they were the product and the heirs.

For them the whole question boiled down to modernization and "europeanization" of Spain. Schools and Pantries. In 1931 with the (to them) almost surprising coming to power of the Republic, they had the opportunity to create schools—13,000 during the first year of the new regime—but they did not know how to fill the national pantry. They could not know because for that it was necessary to break with all the causes which, during the reign of a ruinous and bloody Empire, had emptied the pantry of the country and had even succeeded in killing the desire of its sons to fill it anew.

The pantry of Spain depended basically upon three factors: agriculture, industry (located mostly along the periphery of the country) and mining. Agriculture in the south and center was in

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VICTOR ALBA is a Spanish journalist who spent six years in Franco's prisons and is now living in Mexico City where he arrived recently from Paris. While staying in France he published several books on the Spanish question, among them *Insomnie Espagnole.*

the hands of 300 feudal families whereas in the north and along the coasts it was scattered among three million small landowners (whose tiny plots were sometimes even further divided among subowners of the water or trees on the property). The industry of Catalonia and of the Basque country, pitted against the centralism of the big landowners, never succeeded in developing fully. In order to defend themselves the Catalan and Basque industrialists created the nationalist movements of their respective regions—the leadership of which, during the days of the Republic, shifted to the labor movement which had developed in their own factories. Mining came to be monopolized by British, French and Belgium capital. This would not have been so important if Spanish capitalism had developed rapidly enough to absorb the import of foreign capital, but under the circumstances it proved disastrous. Ownership of the majority of public utilities, railways, the telephone system, water, gas, electric works and even the armament industry passed into foreign hands. Among these foreign interests the American International Telephone and Telegraph Company played by no means a negligible role.

Thus the sources which could have replenished the national pantry were not at the disposal of the nation. The aristocracy lived abroad and cultivated and developed its lands only to the degree dictated by its immediate cash needs. It left to the liberal or conservative politicians the task of maintaining order throughout a countryside constantly agitated by peasant revolts. The Basque and Catalan industrialists, although exploiting national demands for purposes of blackmail, were concerned chiefly with gaining favorable protective tariffs from the central government. Also they were afraid of the labor movement and therefore tended never to accentuate too sharply their differences with the feudal forces which protected them against strikes and against the activities of the anarchists. The Catalan textile industry and Basque iron and steel industry had only just emerged out of the pre-capitalist stage. The banking system was also only just developing. Banking still meant usury and industry a sort of artisan production animated by a profit-hungry mentality. Spain's banking and industrial interests made huge fortunes through deliveries to both sides during the First World War but neglected the home market because they were afraid to take up the struggle against feudalism. Foreign capital, finding no response on the part of indigenous capitalism, came more and more to adopt the Spain-is-a-colony attitude, intervening

in domestic affairs and backing those governments which offered guarantees against the activities of the workers and the attacks of the intellectuals.

The intellectuals of petty bourgeois origin and a working class only recently emerged from the miserable peasantry were the only really stimulating and active forces within the nation. The other classes, benumbed by four centuries in which they did nothing but manage and enjoy the gold and silver of the West Indies, were no longer capable of taking the initiative. They merely remained on the defensive, protecting what was left of their past riches and talking endlessly of their past glories and splendors.

The intellectuals of the generation of '98 stemmed from a bourgeoisie which had no awareness of its class mission. This bourgeoisie had appeared too late on the scene of history—at a time when the working class was already in the ascendancy. Thus the Spanish intelligentsia, caught between a social movement which it could not accept and official feudalism, took refuge in "europeanism."

Labor, on the other hand, fed from human material coming from the countryside, yet lacking great industrial concentration and separated from the artisans of the Middle Ages only by the fact that it worked for wages—not by its habits and customs—developed in two directions which, though they seemed opposed, led to the same end. There was the Catalan and Andalusian anarchist movement which as early as 1843 proclaimed a general strike in Barcelona. By strikes, terrorism and direct action it hoped to transform society when the "great hour" struck into a federation of free communes. On the other hand, there was Socialism (Madrid and the Basque country) which from its beginnings was reformist in reaction to the childish extremism of the Anarchists (who in turn were fed by the reaction from socialist reformism). The two union federations reflected these two different tendencies: the anarchistic National Confederation of Labor (CNT) and the socialistic General Confederation of Labor (UGT). After many years of difficult struggles and bloody insurrections, of governmental as well as proletarian terrorism, the Spanish labor movement by the time the Republic was proclaimed commanded a mass of adherents and a group of leaders who were most excellent material from the human point of view, who were imbued with fighting spirit and a willingness to sacrifice but who also lacked political experience, theoretical preparation and programmatic precision.

The intellectuals, on their part, also did not know what they

really wanted or what they should do. If anything, they wanted schools while the labor movement wanted to fill the pantry. Both groupings, however, understood very well what forces opposed the realization of their respective desires and this led eventually to the alliance that developed between Republicans, Socialists and Anarchists.

The army, whose high command was traditionally in the hands of the landholding aristocracy, appeared for the moment to be the most dangerous factor. There was one officer for every four privates in that army and 45% of the national budget was spent on this armed force which only lost wars (Cuba, Morocco, Philippines) and won *coups d'etat* against the Spanish people (Sagunto, Primo de Rivera). The tradition of military insurrections—the famous pronunciamentos—made this army an ever-threatening instrument in the hands of the feudal forces.

But the danger from the army would have been less serious had it not been for the fact that the Catholic Church had long been busy making obedient, if not devoted, servants out of its soldiers as well as out of peasants and working class women. Education, censorship of books and films, a *de facto* and *de jure* monopoly over the individual conscience (the Catholic religion was the only religion officially sanctioned and subsidized by the state) were entirely in the hands of the Catholic hierarchy. This hierarchy, since it did not have to struggle against competition of Protestants and other "heretics," developed an ideological conformism and intransigence which had no parallel outside of Spain.

The repeated blunders of feudalism, however, finally brought the situation to a point at which, without anybody really knowing why, a reversal of all trends became possible. The Republic was proclaimed. The intellectuals and the "generation of '98" suddenly became the governing elite. Socialists became ministers; the Anarchists at long last elected to go to the polls. Spain in April 1931 (how many eons ago this now seems) seemed ready to accomplish without too much damage what the French had accomplished in 1789, what the English had succeeded in doing at the time of Cromwell or what the American had done in 1776. It seemed possible that Spain could achieve her democratic revolution without bloodshed and with no special heroism being required. Laws were to give land to the peasants, separate Church from State, democratize the army, control foreign capital and thus open a new era in which the national pantry was again to be filled.

But the intellectuals, those who create schools and frame laws, forgot one thing. They forgot that they were living in the midst of the 20th century—the century that witnessed the Russian Revolution, growth of the union movement, and the spreading of the socialist message. When the bourgeoisie is in the ascendancy, a democratic revolution is all that is required. But the Spanish bourgeoisie, which was always in terror of the labor movement, was unable to lead a democratic revolution or to defend it. Only the Catalan and Basque petty bourgeoisie, which possesses a certain audacity because of its peculiar national tradition of struggle, in any way rose to the occasion. Throughout the rest of the country, it was necessary for the working class to assume the leading role in the realization of democratic reforms. But these democratic reforms, the moment they were decreed and implemented by the labor parties, became—even against the conscious will of these parties—democratic socialist reforms. To the distribution of the land was added workers' control of factories, and separation of Church and State became supplemented by equal and non-religious education. Democratization of the army became linked to the arming of the people.

All this, however, was not accomplished peacefully after the proclamation of the Republic but tragically under a rain of Nazi and Fascist bombs.

The hesitations and lack of audacity of the Republican forces made the Franco rebellion possible. The army not having been dissolved, the economic power of the Church not having been destroyed, it became clear that the measures against feudalism such as the (insufficient) distribution of the land, the (dearly bought) autonomy of the regions, the (rather inoffensive) cultural development would inspire a counter-offensive on the part of the feudal forces who saw in these reforms a threat to their power. Never in history has a class resigned itself to disappear as a class without putting up a fight.

This lack of audacity on the left—still evident even in the civil war period despite the rapid radicalization which was then occurring —was heightened by the desertion of the bourgeoisie to the ranks of feudalism on the one hand and by the ignorance regarding the real situation as evinced by international capitalism. The latter showed a complete lack of understanding of things Spanish and believed the most stupid rumors spread by Franco's propaganda machine before, during, and after the civil war. It was lack of information of the diplomats—a lack to which we should become

accustomed since we know that they are the only improvised technicians of capitalism—which made possible the financial and diplomatic pressure on the Republic in order to halt its modest reform program and which also permitted international aid to Franco during the civil war.

Once again it is lack of information which threatens sooner or later to provoke a new civil war in Spain. It is for this reason that I have devoted so much space to the background of the real problems of the country before turning to the present situation. Efforts are being made to resolve what is pompously called "the Spanish problem" and which should be termed simply "the Franco headache," even though this "headache" is for Spaniards a bloody, benumbing and grotesque one. Aren't these efforts rather futile? What is the real situation?

The bankrupt generation of '98 and the aborted generation of the Republic have been followed by a new human wave. Can it be called a generation? This hesitation should not be considered too partisan or merciless. It takes into account three years of civil war—with its hunger, diplomatic maneuvers, its communist sub-dictatorship, terror and ever-growing aftermath of deception. It also takes into account eight years of Franco's regime—successively offered to the world under names that are new in the political lexicon such as "national-syndicalism," "organic democracy," and, presently, "lifelong regency."

The names may vary but the reality behind them has long been known. At bottom it is that which, under different guises, one tried to ignore under Hitler and Mussolini during peace time but which was quickly "discovered" when the Second World War began: concentration camps accompanied by the indifference of those who were not led there; directed education of the youth in face of the powerlessness of those who are unable to take charge of it; control of the economy in an atmosphere of shady deals; militarization of life without any way out for anti-militarists; propaganda directed both inside and outside the country, without any attempt to be taken seriously and really to be believed.

The results will necessarily be the same—only the peculiar problems of Spain will complicate them. If Italy after 23 years of Mussolini and Germany after 13 years of Hitler cannot be governed democratically and stand in need of "democratic re-education," if these two countries, quite apart from their central position in Europe,

create successive problems and need the constant intervention of businessmen, diplomats and even Allied military men, Spain will scarcely need less attention nor will it provoke less international friction—again quite apart from its strategic international position.

The new generation of Spaniards has not known any active political life. It knows nothing of trade union struggles, ideological debates, electoral propaganda. It considers the two anterior generations, which had just begun to serve their political apprenticeship, to have been a complete and collective failure.

Left to its own resources, this new generation—which grew up during the civil war and after—is not interested in any problem which it cannot grasp immediately and which does not have direct practical import. As in the rest of Europe, the Black Market is the framework within which the young men and women who are going to be the citizens and leaders of tomorrow are supposed to build their life. Basically they are interested in nothing—not even in making money since they know this is possible only for important figures of the regime and those who wear a uniform—be it khaki, a blue shirt or a black cassock. They attempt to live—not necessarily to continue living. They accept prison, beating and constant constraint as natural hazards of modern existence. They don't even imagine that things could be different, could change. They are traditionalists because they have never known anything else.

A simple example from my own experience may highlight the psychology of this young Spanish generation. A friend of mine was condemned to 12 years and a day of prison because he had been a captain in the Republican Army. He had a five-year-old daughter. She is 12 now. Having heard so often of the "12 years and one day" which had been allotted to her father, she once inquired of her mother: "When will I have my 12 years and one day?" Or, to complete the picture, this story of my nephew, who is a pupil of a school of the "Brothers of Christian Doctrine" near Barcelona. His mother chided him for his bad marks at his final examination. "Don't you worry," he said. "Next year I'll be old enough to enter the Falange of the school and then I'll always be able to say that I had exercises, training and other military services if I am reproached for bad marks." The boy was eight years old when he announced this heroic decision to enter the Falange. He is now 12. In one of his recent letters he innocently inquired why I did not return to Spain. When I replied that I wanted to write what I thought, he answered: "But nobody will interfere with your writing

here, because I am sure you have no bad thoughts . . . " and then he added, " . . . or in any case you wouldn't write them down."

The generation of '98 is without prestige, the generation of the Republic without too much courage or rendered fanatical in one sense or another, the generation of the civil war in the process of loosing itself since it does not even feel the need of writing what it thinks as it does not think anything worth recording—that is the panorama of present-day Spain. This picture finds further confirmation. Not a single writer, musician, or painter of note has appeared in the last ten years. Not a single scientist above the stage of technological specialization. Not a single cry of revolt—one of those unjust and excessive accusations which the youth of the whole world has always flung in the face of its elders after each war. Nothing, nothing, nothing. It almost seems as if all Spain leads a happy and beatified life!

But since one cannot accept this, one is forced to conclude that Spain is being sterilized. Even in the oppositional milieux one finds no new elements. In all the years I have lived in these circles, I have never encountered other faces than those I knew already before the civil war. And in the emigration it is the same. . .

Still Spain carries within herself her own dangers and her own opportunities. The fact that Franco has succeeded only in bringing the country back to the impasse from which the Republic attempted to rescue it, gives to the Spanish problem characteristic traits which can prove either tragic or fortunate, depending upon the understanding of these problems which the diplomats may be able to acquire.

If the benumbing system to which the whole country is submitted does not end soon, the Spanish question will become more acute, because instead of Spain being inhabited by politically civilized people, it will be settled by young savages hardly rid of their rags of political barbarism, the blue shirt. On such men, the two preceding generations, who alone have some democratic experience, will have no influence whatsoever.

It is necessary that the diplomats not only be convinced of the urgency—the practical not sentimental urgency—to resolve the Franco "headache," but also that they understand that in order to overcome this ailment it is necessary to resolve the "Spanish question." I have outlined of what this question consists: feudalism versus democracy. The marriage of the first with the second, which

the Republic attempted, has proved to be impossible. So one is forced to choose. If the diplomats chose feudalism, let them keep Franco; but they must then expect a formidable growth of Communism in Spain. Only Communism could offer compensation to the lost generation of the Republic and at the same time could give to the benumbed generation of Franco a discipline different from that which it now experiences and which has the advantage of being freely chosen and promising adventure. And let them in any case not hope permanently to avert civil war if they make such a choice.

But if the diplomats—not because of ideological reasons but for very practical ones—chose democracy, then they must expect distribution of the land, separation of Church and State, nationalized or controlled industry, a state-owned banking system, reinforcement of local autonomy, a popular army (which incidentally would be cheaper and more efficient than the present one). Then they could expect Spain to be led according to European principles—with a bit of chaos, much popular grumbling—but basically Western and violently determined not to repeat the experiences of the camouflaged Communist period of 1938-9 or the feudal fascism of 1939-19—.

In any case the diplomats should not expect to be able to bring into the world that political monster that seems to be desired in the chancelleries, a feudal state with a democratic facade, workers collaboration within a regime that would not even be capitalist but rather like some remnant of the Middle Ages. If one wants to accomplish this, Franco may as well be left in his place.

To sum up, we must convince those who are interested in Spanish affairs that it is not simply a matter of displacing Franco. With the expulsion of Franco, feudalism must also be expelled. For the second time in Spanish history, a bloodless revolution is possible. It is not yet too late to utilize the human material that is already available and to inspire those who would succeed it. It is as yet not too late to erase the causes of the civil war which will persist as long as feudalism, with or without Franco, remains the social regime in Spain.

All this means, however—and the diplomats shall not prevent us saying it—that only democratic socialism can save Spain from her decay—and save diplomacy from becoming ridiculous. If the first role is logical, the second would, to say the least, be unexpected.

THE MODERN TOTALITARIAN STATE

Rudolf Hilferding

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The publication of Rudolf Hilferding's Das Finanzkapital *in Vienna in* 1910 *was the high-water mark of classical Marxism. In it, the leading features of pre-*1914 *capitalism, particularly the structural changes following in the wake of industrial concentration and the increasingly strategic position of the banks, were subjected to a thoroughgoing analysis. Much of what has been said and written on this score in the last few years was adumbrated in Hilferding's pioneer work. If, nevertheless, his conclusions did not anticipate the cataclysmic upheavals of the last two decades, the discrepancy was due not so much to any defect in his technical economic analysis as it was to the sociological and political framework of his economic thinking. Originally, Hilferding accepted the crucial "Marxian" dictum that the state was, in the main, a passive instrumentality in the hands of those who wield economic power. The history of our times has not been very obliging to this formula; yet it persists as an article of faith. In the last two decades, its potency for error in practice no less than in theory has been apparent to all but those who would trade an arduous reality for an easy dogma. Hilferding was not of this breed. The three articles which follow (in abridged form) were originally published under the pseudonym of Richard Kern, in the* Neuer Vorwaerts, *the organ of the German Social Democrats in exile. Taken in conjunction with his analysis of the concept of state capitalism, which appeared in the June issue of* MODERN REVIEW, *they go far beyond the confines of traditional Marxism and supply the basis for a more realistic theory of politics for the problems of our time.*

RUDOLF HILFERDING, internationally famous Marxian economist and one of the leading theoreticians of German Social Democracy, died at the hands of the Gestapo in France in 1941. His widely quoted article, "State Capitalism or Totalitarian State Economy," was published in the June issue of MODERN REVIEW.

WORLD ECONOMY IN DANGER OF WAR[1]

It is becoming increasingly difficult to describe the course of economic events in purely economic terms. The laws peculiar to the capitalistic economy have been progressively modified as a result of their subordination to the requirements of politics. In Japan, Russia, Germany and Italy, a dictatorial government apparatus has acquired control of the material and human forces of production, and has compelled them to operate for the maintenance and expansion of its own power. Politics dominates economics for its own ends; the economy has lost its freedom of choice. In by far the greater part of the world, this totalitarian dictatorship over the economic system has not as yet been fully achieved. But in eastern and central Europe, and in many Latin and South American countries, political power has achieved decisive influence in economic development. And in many areas of the so-called free economy, principally in Switzerland, Belgium, Holland, the British Empire and the United States, attempts have been made to create a controlled economy. They have had a considerable influence on the course of economic development, especially in France and the United States.

The division of the economic world into a free and a regulated sector has, in its initial stage, brought about a marked discrepancy in the economic development of the various countries. Attempts have therefore been made to minimize the impact of the world economy by such devices as exchange control, monopoly of foreign trade, and various measures of autarchy. Increased governmental expenditures, the resulting increase in the burden of taxation, inflationary financing and increase in the domestic debt, coupled with the suspension of services on foreign debts, have enabled the domestic economies of the dictatorships to expand while, on the other hand, in the countries with free economies, with the exception of France, the severe crisis of 1929 did not begin to level off until after 1933, and then slowly.

But the decisive thing is not the wounds inflicted on world trade and the international division of labor by super-protectionism, autarchic economics, and government-sponsored industrialization, nor even the disruption of the international financial and credit structure resulting from governmental bankruptcies. For, after all, these economic consequences could have been gradually overcome

[1]Richard Kern: *"Die Weltwirtschaft in Kriegsgefahr," Neuer Vorwaerts,* No. 289, Jan. 1, 1939.

by the great elasticity of the capitalistic economy. What is decisive, then, is not so much the economy as the political purpose served by economy planning. That purpose is to put an increasing proportion of a steadily growing productive capacity in the service of war preparation. In short, it means the conversion of the economy into a war economy. For this reason, the effect on countries with free economies in the second stage, into which we have just entered, has become immediate and acute. The war economy of the totalitarian group compels all the others to modify their economies and to make material and organizational changes. . . . The sector representing the state economy expands, and induces a change in the distribution of productive forces. It becomes the norm for the type and scale of investments, and a co-determinant of the demand for raw materials and of the employment of labor power. If we consider them from an economic point of view, armaments have become an essential prop of prosperity. But it is a rather unique prosperity, combining as it does increased business activity and increased employment with a rising tax burden, the suspension or retardation of social progress, and a fixed or declining standard of living for the masses. . . .

THE ECONOMIC YEAR 1935[2]

From the very moment of its inception, two opposite errors were committed in evaluating the crisis. The one regarded it as a typical phase of the capitalistic cycle of the eight to ten year periodicity, differing from all previous cycles only by its extent. The other school of thought, relying on its ostensible 'Marxian" insight, explained it as the permanent crisis, the last crisis of a declining capitalism which had now, at long last, entered its final phase. Unemployment without parallel, progressive impoverishment of the masses and stagnation of production are the characteristic features of this period. Only a fascist regime would be in a position strong enough to crush the rebellion of the masses and to save capitalism. But, by the same token, the collapse of the capitalistic economy is also viewed as offering the proletariat its opportunity; a stagnating economy might revive its effort to seize power.

Both notions — the vulgar capitalistic as well as the vulgar revolutionary — overlook the specific character of the period which was ushered in by the First World War. It is the extra-economic force of war, with its incalculable and long-underestimated economic

[2]Richard Kern: *"Das Wirtschaftsjahr* 1935," *Neuer Vorwaerts,* No. 134, Jan. 5, 1936.

consequences, which supplies the principal explanation of the economic structure of this period. And next in importance to it is another postwar phenomenon, *viz.,* the widespread intervention of the power of the state in the affairs of the capitalistic economy, seeking to regulate and modify it, which has profoundly affected the course of events to this very day.

The extraordinary enhancement of the power of the state and its comparative autonomy vis-a-vis society and its various classes and groups, may be reckoned among the transcendant events of recent historical development. The process began in the period of classical imperialism, about the beginning of the 90's, and experienced a very great acceleration during the war. The power of the state made the economy the servant of war, regulated production and distribution, and put an end to the free play of market forces. The war came to an end, but the recognition of the possibility of state intervention in the economy persisted, and the unparalleled economic difficulties which the war left in its wake continued to bring about fresh acts of intervention by the state. The relative autonomy and independence of the economic system which characterized the liberal era is at an end. Politics now determines the fate of the economy, and its power is apparently great enough to modify the operation of economic laws.

Needless to say, politics does not operate in a vacuum. It functions within a social context in which classes pursue their own interests and struggles. Nevertheless, the close connection between the state and the economy, and the state's use of the economy for the immediate purposes at hand, has not prevented the state from evolving into an enormous apparatus with a purpose of its own, and one not completely contingent on other factors. Nor has it prevented the state, in pursuit of this purpose, from encroaching on activities in which the interests of this or that class may be opposed to it. The clearest expression of this autonomy of state power is seen wherever the struggles among different classes finally results in their loss of ability to determine their own policies, and elevates the power of the state to the position of an independent factor (the dictatorship) over which social forces . . . can no longer exercise direct influence; or if they can, it is in a very attenuated form at best.

The effect of war and the growing intervention of politics in the sphere of economic law must therefore be given primary consideration in any attempt really to understand the economic situa-

tion; and any attempt to interpret the course of development in purely economic terms, remains incomplete and deficient. In reality, imbalance of the economy. Its outstanding characteristics, therefore, the crisis which broke out in 1928-29 was based on the war-created can not be understood without having recourse to the war's influence. . . .

FOUNDATIONS OF FOREIGN POLICY[3]

The tempestuous course which foreign policy has taken since Hitler's accession to power, the apparently endless changes in its content, the furious ideological propaganda accompanying it, make it urgently necessary to attempt a Marxian analysis, one which will realistically highlight the real driving forces and interests lurking behind the ideological facade. Such an attempt is far more difficult, and more readily subject to error, than it was in the period before the First World War. Our first task in any attempt to understand the present-day situation is to unravel the different driving forces of the two periods.

The period before the war was one of ebullient intensive and extensive development of the capitalistic economy. It was characterized, on the economic side, by the exploitation of finance capital and, on the political side, by the promotion of imperialism. The overflowing capitalistic wealth constantly sought out new spheres for investment — undeveloped areas which it could combine with its own economic area and penetrate by means of capital exports. The same development also led to the opening of backward European areas; to the capitalistic penetration of the southeast; the revival of hitherto "history-less" nations subject to alien sovereignty, and to their desire for national and political independence. The Spanish-American war for Cuba and the Philippines, the Anglo-Boer war for the possession of South Africa, the Turko-Italian war for Tripoli, aggravated the tensions among the big powers and increasingly shifted the final decision from the periphery to the European center.

During this period, foreign policy was completely and consistently dominated by the imperialistic wing of the bourgeoisie. The economic analysis of imperialism, of the effects of capitalistic expansion on the national movements for independence, clearly revealed the driving forces behind foreign policy and permitted us to foresee

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[3]Richard Kern: *"Grundlagen der Auswaertigen Politik," Neuer Vorwaerts,* No. 179, Nov. 15, 1936.

its outcome with a high degree of certitude. For, in those days, the interests of the imperialistic bourgoisie directly determined the terms of governmental power.

But even as far back as this period, a noticeable change began to take place in the relationship between political power and society. Imperialistic policy required a strong, concentrated power in the hands of the state. The liberal principle of non-interference of the state in the affairs of the economic system, of the peaceful cooperation of nations bound together in a world economy by free trade, of the greatest possible reduction in political coercion, repudiated any attempt to place the coercive power of the state at the service of expanding national capitalisms. To have done so would only have meant the augmentation of the state's power. Nevertheless, despite all this, economic competition soon turned out to be a dangerous struggle between the powers.

Having been called into being by imperialistic forces, the newly acquired coercive power of the state was inhibited by its very origin. It was the servant of imperialistic policy and its own strength therefore depended on the strength of that policy. But in the course of its development, its enhancement also served to create an increasingly large sphere of action for the state on its own account. The coercive organization of the state developed tendencies calculated to maintain and enlarge its own power. A certain degree of immunity from the society which sired it began to make itself noticeable. It was greatest wherever, as in Germany and Russia, state power had always claimed a larger measure of independence of bourgeois society than was the case in the western states. It would take us too far beyond the scope of this article to show precisely how this relative independence of state power led to the outbreak of the First World War. . . . It need only be emphasized that, profound as some of the economic conflicts were, they led to war only when then became the substance of state policy, directly threatening the very existence of states.

The enhancement and liberation of state power made tremendous advances during the war. Society was subjected to a dictatorship for war purposes. The influence of the bourgeoisie was observable only in the method of financing the war and in the participation in war profits. And together with this, a truly revolutionary psychological transformation took place. The state now appeared as the omnipotent master of the economic system. It became the undisputed

view of the times that the state could lead, direct and command the economy. The last vestiges of liberalism disappeared.

Acquiescence in the omnipotence of the state received further support in the crises of the postwar period. All sections of society came to regard the power of the state as capable of anything and responsible for everything. Personal and economic limits to state activity were no longer recognized, and the expansion of the jurisdiction of the state over society encountered progressively fewer psychological barriers.

The greatest maturation of such power, and the largest measure of its independence of society, was achieved by the state in the totalitarian countries governed by dictatorships. Social classes might remain unaffected, or they might be destroyed, or new classes might be created by the state — but society itself became "statified."

The mechanism of the totalitarian state surpasses all its predecessors, first by the range of its coercive instrumentalities, the military, the police, the courts, and the administration. . . . Second, it surpasses them in the scope of its activities. The hitherto autonomous operation of the economy is subjected to regulation by the state for its own political ends. Third, independent social organizations, particularly economic organizations, are broken up or replaced by units sponsored by the state. Fourth, a host of persons, drawn from the most divergent origins, are fused together into a so-called "party" with a stake in the preservation of the power of the state. For better or worse, its members are wedded to that power.

All this does not mean that the influence exerted by the other classes or groups is completely obliterated. It does mean, however, that side by side with these classes, and towering above them, a tremendous force has asserted itself and is sufficiently strong to undermine or crush all other class interests whenever they conflict with its own peculiar purposes and goals.

The primary purpose of the totalitarian state is the preservation and expansion of its own power. This forms the substance of its domestic as well as its foreign policy. The fascist dictators come to power by winning a mass following under the symbol of nationalism. In the postwar period, this was the only way they could mobilize the *déclassé* groups (or those individual members of all groups who were in danger of losing their social foothold) as well as portions of almost all social classes, including the ruling circle of the military and top-level bureaucracy. . . .

The power politics of the dictators is a very costly policy. It

is costly at home because the maintenance and expansion of the specifically dictatorial apparatus, in addition to the authentic governmental machinery, requires considerable expenditures. But even these are negligible in comparison with the requirements of . . . foreign policy. Power politics requires the attainment of military superiority. It is therefore characteristic of the dictatorial states that they always strive to break the tie which binds military power to current productive capacity. They manage this through a reign of terror which subordinates the economy and all economic subjects to the purposes of power. Consequently, preparation for war is subject only to its own requirements which, per se, are limitless. Technology is therefore in a perpetual state of transformation. Military leadership alone decides on these requirements, and purely in terms of technical military factors; the task of state power is to assure their fulfillment. The increasing mechanization of the military machine, the growing participation of trained and highly skilled technical troops of all levels, makes for an enormous increase in costs. . . . Limitless, too, is the effort to attain military superiority over every conceivable hostile combination and to keep up with the pace of counter-armaments. Finally, it becomes necessary to complete the armament program in the briefest possible period of time in order to pass beyond the danger zone.

Inflation and the planned war economy are the instruments for overcoming the discrepancy which exists, at least in the critical period, between economic capacity and military requirements. Control of foreign trade and the allocation of raw materials, force the existing powers of production into the service of armament production at the expense of the production of useful goods.

The necessary consequence of such a power policy is the progressive deterioration of the economy. Yet it determines the direction and goal of foreign policy.

Primarily, it was the war which put an end to the classic policy of imperialism, the policy of finance capital. To analyze all the reasons for this would take us too far afield. We shall merely indicate three decisive factors. First, an economic factor. The postwar period has considerably reduced the pressure to export capital even in the leading capitalistic states. The export of capital has not quite recovered from the credit crisis; but to the extent that it is still possible, it can easily find employment opportunities in the developmental requirements of the countries still retarded in their capitalistic development, or in the newly rising raw material countries. Never-

theless, the exclusive control of foreign policy by the imperialistic section of the bourgeoisie has been broken in the democratic countries. Another very significant circumstance is the growing resistance which imperialistic policy encounters in its erstwhile subjects. The maturation of the "history-less" nations, their urge to national independence, has made extraordinary progress during and after the war. . . .

The policy of the dictatorial states, however, has nothing in common with the classical variety of imperialism. That imperialism was the policy of powerful, rapidly rising states with a surplus capital seeking investment — the policy of a super-wealthy capitalism. But the dictator states are poor, not because they have no colonies . . . but simply because the power politics of the dictators makes them progressively poorer. Germany and Italy require no spheres of investment for unemployed capital surpluses; they require no undeveloped areas which they can open by capital investments in railroads, etc. What they need mainly are developed sources of raw materials — economic regions which they can integrate with their own economic areas to solve the shortage of means of subsistence and raw materials produced by the idiotic overreaching of their power politics. Far from having a similarity to prewar imperialistic policies, the programs of Germany, Italy, and in a slightly different way, of Japan, are far more comparable to the policy of colonial theft of early capitalism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centures. The sole difference is that in those days the policy was pursued by commercial and shipping capital, while today it is the policy of the dictatorial states. For these states, with their dislocated economies, it is a new type of primitive accumulation, an extra-economic method of acquiring wealth by force. . . . It is a vicious circle: power politics leads to economic disruption; economic disruption drives toward wars of conquest for territories which are indispensible to the continuation of power politics. . . .

[*Translated by Morris Watnick.*]

"PERONISMO"—IS IT FASCIST?

Robert J. Alexander

This is an age of stereotyped political thinking. There is an all-too-ready tendency to stick a "fascist" or "communist" label on someone or something under the impression that once such a label has been bestowed, there is no need for further thought.

With regard to the Americas this tendency is as notable as elsewhere. There is a widespread attempt to fit the political groups of Latin America into the same pigeonholes that are used for political classification in Europe. This often leads to amusing and sometimes tragic results. There are at least two main political trends in Latin America which do not fit into any customary slots: *Peronismo* and *Aprismo.*[1]

The movement headed by President Juan Domingo Peron of Argentina (which for convenience we label *Peronismo*) is not confined to Argentina alone. There are at least three resonably powerful *Peronista* parties—the *Partido Peronista* of Argentina, the *Partido Trabalhista* of Brazil, and the *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario* (MNR) of Bolivia. In addition there is the small, rather synthetic *Partido Laborista* of Chile.

The chief significance of the *Peronista* movement throughout South America is that it is an expression of the awakening of the masses and the wave of unrest now sweeping the continent. This awakening is expressed in the economic nationalism which now characterizes the Latin American countries, in the rapid growth of the trade union movement in recent years in most South American countries, and in a variety of political movements, of which the *Peronista* parties are one type.

The advent of these parties coincides with the large-scale entry of the generally illiterate, strictly native (as opposed to immigrant) masses into the political life of their respective countries. The stronghold of the *Peronistas* in Argentina is the more backward

[1]EDITOR'S NOTE: The *Aprismo* movement will be dealt with in an early issue of *Modern Review* in another article also written by Mr. Alexander.

ROBERT J. ALEXANDER has recently returned from an extensive tour of South America where he studied at first hand the movements with which he deals. He is the author of *Labor Parties in Latin America* and former correspondent for *La Vanguardia.* He now teaches economics at Rutgers University.

workingclass element, recruited mainly from recently urbanized workers who took no active part in politics before coming to the cities. The center of the Bolivian MNR strength is the tin miners who were never successfully organized until the Villarroel regime. In Brazil, fifteen years of Vargas dictatorship placed most of the workers in the position of the more backward workers of Argentina —politically and historically illiterate but nonetheless rebellious.

In Argentina, a profound change in the composition of the urban workingclass paved the way for *Peronismo.* Until about 1930 the urban workingclass of that nation had been made up chiefly of immigrants. These immigrants had brought with them from their native countries (principally Italy and Spain) the usual workingclass ideologies—Anarchism, Socialism, Syndicalism and Communism. As a result, the labor movement of Argentina prior to the advent of *Peronismo* was dominated by these ideas and by leaders professing to hold them.

In 1930, however, immigration virtually ceased. As time went on two things then happened. First, the sons of the immigrants came to replace their fathers in shops, factories and offices. The history of the labor movement in the U. S. indicates that the sons and daughters of immigrant workers do not tend to retain their parents' ideology. And so it was in Argentina. The children of the old Socialist, Anarchist and Syndicalist immigrants tended to reject these ideas as part and parcel of the "foreigness" of their parents. Second, with the cutting off of immigration, the recruiting of industrial workers had to be carried on in the rural areas among semi-illiterate natives who had never heard of Socialism, Anarchism or Fascism. It would have been senseless to appeal to these workers in the name of Socialism against Peron—or even in the name of Democracy—because they did not know the meaning of the former, and had never experienced much of the latter. And it meant little, either, to call Peron a "fascist," since that term was also unknown to them.

The significance of this increase in the non-immigrant workingclass—particularly in Buenos Aires—is revealed by the figures on increase in industrial employment from 1929 to 1942. There was an increase of 24% in industrial employment throughout the country from 1937 to 1943.[2] In the five years since 1942 this increase has

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[2]Jose Figuerola, *La Colaboracion Social en Hispanoamerica, Editorial Sudamericana,* Buenos Aires, 1943.

been equally if not even more rapid. Some three hundred thousand rural workers are estimated to have come to the cities from 1939 to 1946.

These new urban industrial workers, having broken from their traditional conservative rural backgrounds, were a fertile field for agitation. Being political novices, they readily fell prey to the demagogy of Colonel Peron and accepted his promises (and fair measure of fulfillments) as a message of hope and possible pointing of the way to a better life. It is highly important to take note of this element of hopefulness in the *Peronista* movement, which would seem to be in sharp contrast to the predominantly desperate nature of European fascism.

In the case of Bolivia this same factor certainly was of utmost importance. For fifteen years before the Villarroel regime came to power there had been attempts to organize the tin miners, none of which had been successful. But under the patronage of the Villarroel government and backed principally by the *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario,* the miners were organized, the tyranny of the mining companies ended and small but significant wage increases won while prices in the company stores were reduced slightly. For the first time the tin miner had the opportunity to make his voice heard. Such was his gratitude and loyalty to the MNR government that when it was overthrown and many of its leaders killed in 1946, the new regime did not dare to touch the MNR mine union leaders.

In Brazil the present-day Vargas movement, the *Partido Trabalhista,* has about it (though to a lesser extent perhaps) this same spirit of hopefulness. It springs from the belief that Vargas was the first "to do anything" for the Brazilian workers. No doubt this belief in, and loyalty to, Vargas is in large part the result of intensive propaganda coupled with repressive measures against all who might challenge its claims, but nevertheless it exists and is a potent political factor at the present time.

All three important *Peronista* movements are notable for the fact that they won their mass following *after* their leaders gained power. Thus *Peronismo* became a mass movement in Argentina only after the military group of which Peron emerged the leader had been in power for more than two years. The *Partido Trabalhista* of Brazil was founded in the last months of the Vargas dictatorship. The MNR in Bolivia, though it had had some early middle class backing, did not develop strength among the tin miners—its chief sup-

porters today—until after the coming to power of the Villarroel dictatorship.

The reason why the tenure of office of the three *Peronista* governments was responsible for the development of mass political movements, and one reason for the hopeful spirit of the *Peronista* movements is that these were the first *governments* in their respective countries to evidence much concern for the well-being of the workingclass in those countries. Peron is wrong—maliciously so—when he maintains that his was the first political group in Argentina to do anything for the Argentine workers. There has been a Socialist movement in Argentina since 1896 which had members in parliament from 1904 until 1943 and its small corps of legislators was responsible for an amazing amount of labor legislation in that country. But Peron is correct when he maintains that his was the first *government* to express a marked interest in the workers' welfare. The Socialists of Argentina were never in the government.

The situation is somewhat similar in Brazil. The regimes which preceded Vargas were reactionary for the most part and regarded the labor movement as a challenge to be met by police action. Although there was a fairly strong labor movement before Vargas and some politicians showed an interest in labor problems, Vargas can say with justice that his government was the first to inaugurate a broad legislative program in the field of labor reform. One may question the actual benefit the workingclass has derived from this legislation, but sizable sections of the workingclass are convinced of its value, and this is what counts politically.

In Bolivia the same thing is true in a more restricted sense. Regimes prior to that of Villarroel and the MNR had expressed interest in labor problems. The governments of Colonels Toro and Busch from 1936 to 1939 called themselves "Socialist" and were responsible, for instance, for the establishment of the Labor Code in that country. But these governments did little if anything for the tin miners, who were one of the most oppressed workingclass groups in the country. Less than a month before the death of Colonel Busch in August, 1939, the *Federacion Minera* was organized, but due to the suicide of the president, this miners' federation did not receive the support from the government which was essential to its success. The Villarroel government and the MNR, which came to office without much mass support, saw in the miners a ready source for such backing. The MNR sent talented organizers into

the field, financed the pro-MNR mine leaders, and induced the mining companies to grant concessions to the workers.

The *Peronista* parties, then, are popular mass parties, with a strong base among workingclass elements. I do not believe there is room for doubt that Peron has the support of the large majority of the workers of his country. A significant minority of Brazilian workers back Vargas and the *Partido Trabalhista,* while the MNR is the principal political force among the Bolivian tin miners—rivalled only by the *Partido Obrero Revolucionario,* a Trotskyite party which at the moment is working in close cooperation with MNR elements.

One of the basic differences between actual fascist parties and the *Peronista* parties is the fact that the latter make their principal appeal to the workingclass. The *Peronista* parties are not, like the European fascist groups, organizations which have their primary base in the middle class, with workingclass support of secondary importance. The principal source of Peron's popular support *is* the workingclass with the middle class, particularly the professional and "educated classes," the principal source of his opposition. Even big business and landlord elements fought him as long as they dared and tend to go along now only because they are forced to.

The same tendency is to be noted in Brazil, where the main social base of the Vargas movement is the workingclass. Again among the middle class, particularly the intelligentsia, are to be found the most stalwart opponents of Vargas, and the upper classes—including the Army—have repudiated him now more or less completely. A distinction must be made, however, between the Vargas *Trabalhista* movement as it exists today and the Vargas regime as it was when he was in power. The *Trabalhista* movement, as a popular movement, dates only from a few months before the fall of Vargas, and the original means by which Vargas gained power in 1930 and held it for fifteen years thereafter has little or no bearing on the present-day movement of which Vargas is the chief figure, so far as social base is concerned.

In Bolivia the situation was somewhat different, the MNR stemming originally from a group of fascist-minded intellectuals. However, the MNR has become principally a workingclass movement, its chief spokesmen in Bolivia today being labor leaders and other figures close to the labor movement.

It is noteworthy too that the *Peronista* parties place their emphasis on social questions and not on the kind of nationalistic, jin-

goistic sword-rattling in which the European fascists indulged. It is not to be denied that Peron is a strident nationalist and would-be imperialist, or that the military plans of the men around Peron may in time endanger the whole continent. Nevertheless it is a fact that it was not on the basis of this kind of appeal that Peron won his popularity. Nor was such an appeal instrumental in the case of Vargas or the MNR. The fundamental program on which all three of these movements won their popular support was a social—not primarily a nationalist—program.

As might be suspected under these circumstances, the *Peronista* parties have strong trade union influence. This influence was built up during the administration of the *Peronista* elements in the three countries. In Brazil most of the old officials of the Ministry of Labor are now leaders of the *Partido Trabalhista.* The Party was founded a month or so before the ousting of President Vargas and many elements in the trade unions, which owe their position to the influence of his government, remain loyal to the ex-President. Many other workers continue to support the *Partido Trabalhista* because it seems to be the only party which is both popular and anti-Communist. The *Trabalhistas,* in fact, are the chief rivals of the Communists in the labor movement of Brazil, though a small Socialist group is now emerging which may eventually challenge both the Communists and Vargasites.

It is also significant that before becoming President, Peron was Secretary of Labor and used his position to establish almost complete control over the trade union movement of his country. In part this control was won because Peron "delivered the goods." The packinghouse workers, for example, were able to organize effectively for the first time after the coming to power of the *Peronistas.* The same holds true in the case of the common laborers and transportation workers of the provincial city of Mendoza who made considerable gains in wages and working conditions and founded a completely new labor movement in that region. Many other instances could be named.

But even more important than these actual gains for Argentine workers were the publicity procedures (demagogy if you will) of Peron as Secretary of Labor. In that position he saw to it that every collective bargaining contract marking an advance on the part of the workers was signed and witnessed by Peron—with appropriate ceremonies and photographs. He built up the fiction that all good

things came from the Secretariat of Labor.

As important as actual concessions to the workers and propaganda activities of Secretary Peron in securing his hold on the labor movement was the bribery of labor union leaders. Though the workers were won over largely by the first two methods, they first came to trust Peron and the regime in general under influence of old-time union leaders who became closely associated with the Secretary of Labor personally. Through the new Secretariat of Labor hundreds of positions were opened up ("advisers" to the Secretariat, district representatives, etc.) and were given to those labor leaders who placed themselves at the service of Peron. One highly important union leader who refused to accept such bribery told me that every leader of importance was offered a job or other remuneration according to his status and necessities.

Finally, it should be noted that for a year and a half the Ramirez-Farrell regime had a rigid dictatorship, complete with concentration camps, dissolution of political parties, etc., and that during this time Peron gained practically the undivided attention of the workers, since no competition was allowed.

In Bolivia, as has been indicated, the Miners' Federation became a stronghold of the MNR and this party is reported to have gained influence among the factory workers of La Paz as well. However the attempts of the Villarroel government to gain control of the labor movement as a whole failed. The principal labor organizations outside of the mines are in the hands of other political groups. Nevertheless the MNR's tenure in the government was fruitful to the extent of enabling it to enlist the support of the miners.

The *Peronista* parties have dictatorial and totalitarian tendencies. All at one time or another have been in the government of their respective countries, and each of these governments was a dictatorship. All three groups came to power originally by means of a military *coup d'etat.* Although they all profess to be lovers of democracy, these professions may be doubted. At the moment the *Peronistas*[3] are in power only in Argentina, and there the regime is not *openly* a dictatorship. However by subtle but nonetheless effective means the *Peronista* government is strangling all opposition. There is strict governmental control of the trade unions; freedom of

[3]In using the term *Peronista* in this way, it is not intended to imply that these parties have any central direction or even much contact, but merely that they are similar.

the press is circumscribed by rigid control of newsprint, and use of the labor unions to make it virtually impossible for opposition printers to continue in business; freedom of speech and assembly exist in theory, but hoodlums of the fascist *Alianza Libertadora Nacionalista* are given more or less free reign to break up opposition meetings.

While in power in Brazil, Vargas established a Corporative System modeled along the lines of the Corporate State in Fascist Italy and Portugal. Political parties were abolished and trade unions were reduced to governmental tools for the administration of community medical and health projects. The jails were crowded with political opponents of the Vargas regime, travel within the country was severely restricted, and places of residence and business were subject to frequent search.

In Bolivia, too, the Villarroel regime was a more or less unashamed dictatorship. Many of the principal figures of the country were driven into exile; others went to jail or concentration camps; the legitimate trade unions were severely persecuted, while the government tried to organize its own unions; freedom of speech and of press was severely restricted. Some of the elements of the regime were frank in their admiration of the fascist governments of Europe.

These dictatorial tendencies indicate that the *Peronista* parties, as we have called them, are in the world-wide totalitarian stream; and, more specifically, that they have much in common with the fascist parties of Europe. However, it is our contention that they differ sufficiently in the circumstances in which they have grown and also in the nature of their appeal to justify separate classification. The validity of this point is driven home if we note the fact that there have long existed in Latin America avowedly fascist parties—such as the *Partido Nacista* of Chile, later called the *Vanguardia Socialista Popular* and led by Jorge Gonzalez Von Maree, and the *Partido Integralista,* or *Partido de Representacao Popular* as it is now called, of Brazil.

The principal differences between the *Peronistas* and the Fascists may be summed up under four headings:

1. The *Peronista* movements are basically movements of hope rather than of desperation; represent the first awakening of large elements of the population of their respective countries, and are in that sense part of a general Latin American movement, which in other countries expresses itself through other political organizations

and philosophies—through Aprismo, Socialism and Communism, for example. In contrast, the fascist movements came to power principally as movements of masses driven desperate by economic depression or national humiliation.

2. The appeal of the *Peronista* movements is largely a social appeal, similar to that of the Marxist parties, while fascism made its principal appeal to xenophobia, nationalism and jingoism.

3. The *Peronista* movements have their popular base primarily in the working classes and are opposed by middle class elements, while Fascism made its principal appeal to the middle class, gaining workingclass support only incidentally and relatively late in its history.

4. The *Peronista* movements do not have the outer trappings of Fascism. They lack storm troopers, nor is there the same kind of hero-worshipping, or "leadership principle" that is part of fascist stock-in-trade.

The fundamental points of similarity between the *Peronistas* and the Fascists are their totalitarianism, their demagogy, their basically nationalistic and imperialistic tendencies. The affinities between the two movements are apparently recognized by President Peron, who has insisted on maintaining the closest relationships with the Franco regime in Spain despite the condemnation of world opinion.

A LUSH STATEMENT

Samuel B. Lush is a practical-minded Philadelphian who, in a very American way, has solved America's most pressing foreign problem: How to get along with the Russians.—*New Republic.*

HEAVY-THINKER DEPARTMENT

The people are reactionary by custom, not by nature.—Henry Wallace.

PLIGHT OF LIBERAL EDUCATION

Mei Ko-wang, young Chinese officer selected for advanced training at Washington State College, received in June, 1946, the first Master of Arts degree in Police Science ever granted by an educational institution.—*China Monthly.*

REPORTS

COMMUNISM IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Mark Alexander

It is doubtful whether there exist anywhere else such fertile soil for Communist parties as in the Middle East. Any economic development in these countries will cause deep social changes; such development will undoubtedly take place during the next few years, even if it should be against the wish of the ruling feudalists. Class antagonisms in this part of the world are sharper than anywhere else. There is a fabulously rich aristocracy, a few thousand in every country; a very small middle class numbering perhaps some tens of thousand (relatively smaller than in Czarist Russia!), and the mass of the population living in abject poverty. An industrial proletariat began to develop after the first world war; however industry remained weak to this day and the percentage of industrial workers exceeds nowhere 15-20%. Working class parties arose in the late twenties; they have been lead always by Communists or by Feudalists who tried to establish Islamic workers parties loyal to religion and the existing social order. (In Egypt for instance a "workers party" was recently founded by a prince, relative of King Farouk.) There is no social-democratic tradition worth mentioning. There are a few, small Trotskyite groups in Egypt, Palestine and Iraq, but on the whole the labor movement in the Middle East is an uncontested Communist domain.

The Communist parties, to be sure, are very small; there are 30,000 party members in Syria and the Lebanon, and a few thousand in Egypt, Palestine and Iraq. But the problem is much more complicated and these numbers do not reflect the extent of influence Communists now have in the Middle East. Notwithstanding the fact that the parties are small, they do have every chance to become mass parties in a short time. The situation in Cyprus is very instructive in this respect.

Cyprus does not belong culturally to the Middle East, the intellectual level of the population being much higher than in the Arab countries. The social structure, on the other hand, is very similar. There are not more than 3,000 Communists in Cyprus, but they are the decisive political factor in the Island as they occupy all key positions in the Cypriote Peoples Front (AKEL). Their hold on AKEL is at least as strong as the French Communists domination of the CGT. The mayors of the four largest cities in the Island (Nicosia, Larnaca, Limassol and Famagusta) are Communists as AKEL won every election during the last few years. The Communists, of course, had to make certain concessions to their non-Communist followers; the AKEL is very "religious," village priests take part in practically all

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MARK ALEXANDER is a young roving correspondent in the Middle East for several European newspapers. Recently he has visited Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Iraq and Transjordan.

party meetings. AKEL has been (until very recently) in favor of *Enosis* (Union with Greece) as this is the foremost popular demand in Cyprus, in spite of the fact that an anti-Communist government is in power in Greece. It would hardly be an exaggeration to state that a small town like Larnaca (population 35,000) is as thoroughly Communist as any other city in the world (including Moscow and Leningrad). Pictures of Stalin and Lenin are to be seen in every other shop; all the Marxist and Soviet classics are available in the bookshops, etc.

It seems likely that Communists in the other Middle Eastern countries will travel the Cyprus road also. They will attempt everywhere to initiate people's fronts; their political program does not confine them to one party, but is "all-embracing." Earl Browder (the Browder of 1943-44) would probably be called an "infantile leftist" in the Middle East. Communists here come forward with demands of civil liberties, progressive social measures and legislation, and "capitalist" development of the respective countries. They are very nationalistic too. Mustafa el Aris, the Lebanese Trade Union leader and a member of the executive of the World Federation of Trade Unions, extolled Lebanese democracy (this was before the last fake elections in which not only the democratic forces but also the Communists were beaten) and asserted that Lebanon was the leading democratic country in the Middle East. After the bitter experience of the Lebanese elections, Khalil Bakdash, the Syrian Stalin, said: "It can't happen here. Syria has a much more democratic tradition."

The "malleability" of the Communist parties is limitless. The Palestine Arab Communist paper *Al Itichad* praises the Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin el Husseini, as the only recognized leader of the Palestine Arabs, while the Jewish Communists in their paper call him a war criminal whose place was with the defendants of the Nuremberg trial. Still "there are no differences between Arab and Jewish Communists" according to the spokesmen of the respective parties.

It should be mentioned incidentally that there are two Jewish Communist parties in Palestine as a result of a split which occurred after the dissolution of the Comintern in 1943. The larger one (Palestine Communist Party) is anti-Zionist; but, paradoxically enough, has recently formed a common ideological front with the Zionist extremists, the terrorist organizations. The PCP demands withdrawal of British troops in about the same terms as the terrorists and opposes the effort of Jewish workers in Palestine to stamp out terrorism. The PCP has published a daily paper since February 1947 at a monthly deficit of over £1,000. There is no difference with regard to their loyalty to the Soviet Union between the Palestine Communist Party and the other grouping known as the Communist Association. The latter is mildly pro-Zionist and it seems after Gromyko's declaration in the United Nations debate that its position has been officially endorsed.

Communists everywhere in the Middle East appear as "anti-Imperialists" as they demand the withdrawal of British Troops from Egypt, Palestine and Iraq. This is in conformity both with the Moscow party line and popular sentiment in the different countries. If the British do not withdraw their troops in the next few years, the Communists will have a few

trump cards for the duration. Of course they attack American imperialism too, but this propaganda is not so effective as practical contact with American imperialism has been very limited so far. Angry feelings were aroused by the decision of the American oil companies not to employ organized labor in Syria and the Lebanon. It is obvious that American capitalists will greatly alleviate the Communists task if they succeed in transplanting their anti-labor practices to the Middle East.

There is no direct contact with Soviet Russia either. Soviet consulates exist in Cairo, Beyrouth and Baghdad, but their activities are very confined. If there has been given any help to local Communists, it has been imperceptible so far. Tass correspondents send home long cables (Prof. Korostovtzeff, the Tass representative in Cairo, cabled 30,000 words in one evening at the time of the last Communist arrests) which very seldom appear in *Pravda* and *Isvestia*. The only link between Russia and the Middle East is the Armenians, of whom 30,000 returned last year to the Armenian Soviet Republic. More than a million Armenians live in the Middle East and it would be a safe guess to estimate the pro-Soviet elements among them at 40 to 50%, the anti-Soviet party "Dashnak" having its stronghold in Egypt. Some of the "repatriants" escaped from the Soviet Armenian paradise and relate very sad tales in the cafés of Beyrouth and Damascus. But the Communist Armenian papers there have succeeded until now in hushing up these second impressions of "Return from the U.S.S.R."

The only serious rival of the Communists at the present time is the Moslem Brotherhood, a religious, semi-fascist mass movement, which was founded in Egypt and has recently spread to Syria. The Moslem Brotherhood was founded to counteract "left-wing" influence, but in order to combat the Communists successfully had to accept extremist nationalist and socialist watchwords. To some extent it seems to be out of the control of its initiators. (There are some interesting historic parallels: Father Gapon's trade unions in Czarist Russia and the Nazi party of Gregor and Otto Strasser in 1932.)

In the last Syrian elections, the Communists polled thousands of votes in some of the larger towns, carrying as much as 10 to 20% of the electorate—in spite of considerable police repression. This correspondent is convinced that the Communists will make even more rapid headway during the next few years. What are the reasons for their successes? I have already mentioned some objective causes: the social structure of the Middle Eastern countries, the sharp class antagonisms, etc. The ruling feudalists, of course, are totally incapable of coping with the "Communist danger." They even want to use expected American loans for all kinds of fancy goods but not for raising the standard of living of the population.

The outlook for the Middle East is very gloomy indeed. The feudal effendis are backed by Britain and the U.S. and their political position is unfortunately fairly stable. On the other hand, it seems almost certain that Communism will spread in the Middle East, if these effendis, who oppose even the mildest democratic reforms, remain in power. Civil liberties are unknown in the Middle East, and it will not make the slightest impressions on the workers and peasants here if they are told that there are no civil liberties or democracy in Soviet Russia. Why should they oppose a totali-

tarian regime with at least some hope of material improvement? They have lived under an oppressive colonial regime for many years and material conditions have gone from bad to worse.

Is there no third alternative to Reaction and Communism in the Middle East? Among the young generation of Arab intellectuals are sincere democratic socialists whose influence would increase immensely if they should receive some practical outside assistance—as the effendis and Communists already do.

AUSTRALIA AND THE ABORIGINES

Harry Roskolenko

Now that the United Nations has discussed the rights of natives—their social and political ambiguities—the protection of natives all over the world has come to the fore. It would be interesting to analyze the relationship the Australian nation has to the Australian aborigine. The "oldest continent" in the world contains, in an anthropological sense, the oldest citizens of the Pacific. In many ways the laws are equally the by-products of ancient regimes, existing like grafted totem poles on the democratic architecture of the world.

When Australia was first settled, an estimated 300,000 aborigines lived on the continent. Today, 160 years later, only 84,000 remain. Killed off, fed poisoned meat (allegedly intended for dogs), beaten, hounded, removed from the source of food and water by the owners of cattle stations who transformed the plains and bush of Australia into beef, lamb and wool factories, the aborigine could only await extinction, or *alcheringa,* his future heaven. Driven from place to place, forced from the coast, he could only roam the dead-heart of Australian civilization. Yet *history* has that noble facet about it. It honors by *place-names,* the rivers, mountains and towns after the original inhabitants, while killing them off.

The dying process has many variations. It may be a gold-mine, wage slavery and peonage, or a culture in transition—the aborigine dispossessed, and the overbearing "civilizers" riding herd on all the civil rights of the natives when they have rights. In Samoa or in New Guinea, the theme of native protection has many curious sounds, all based on mandates from the League of Nations and the level of white culture reached by the natives. But *white* property is the usual measure, the power and the law; whereas native property, when the native can own property, is another matter. The legal dichotomies illustrate the degree of strength between the dying native culture and the forces of the new, white, industrial techniques.

Every modern industrial jungle has its legal talents, its experts, its corporation exploiting the vast resources of the inexhaustible colonial lands. In New Guinea the firms of Burns Philip, Steamships, Ltd., Lever Bros.,

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HARRY ROSKOLENKO recently toured the Far East as roving correspondent for Australian newspapers and for the *New Leader.* He contributed "Letter from Japan" to the July 1947 issue of *Modern Review.* Facts for this contribution were obtained when he visited Alice Springs in Central Australia and Darwin in the Northern Territory.

and the Bulolo Gold-Dredging Co., did pretty much as they wished before the war, paying six shillings a month (one dollar) and harnessing the natives to two and three year contracts as indentured servants. The scale is now 15 shilling or about three dollars per month.

In Australia, the aborigine who lives in the slums of Fitzroy, in Melbourne, and pays Federal taxes, has no Federal right or vote. In South Australia and other states, he must even get a permit to leave the reservation, to travel on a train, to enter a town. Wages at Lake Tyers, in Victoria, is "thrippence" an hours, plus keep. In New South Wales where 10,000 aborigines live, some working as domestics, or laborers on farms, they get 2 shillings a week for pocket-money and 3 shillings is put into a trust-fund —and never seen again. The few hundred aborigines living in the cities get the union scale, though most of them are *lumpen-proletarians.* They enjoy none of the Federal pensions, social services, nor can they own property. Under the supervision of each State rather than the Federal government, the laws regarding aborigines differ both in law and practice, depending mostly on the humane qualities of the supervisor.

Though 2,500 aborigines served in the Australian forces both in Europe and the Pacific, Lt. Reg. Saunders, now a tram conducter, was the only commissioned officer. The benefits accruing servicemen have been bestowed them by the government, but they cannot hold posts in the Returned Soldiers League or in the Civil Service.

The aborigine in the city can attend all schools—but in the country, where he is mostly, the third grade is considered enough education. Yet despite the difficulty he has in educating himself, the aborigine has produced two well-known painters. Albert Namajira is the best known. There is David Unipon, a preacher and author; Harold Blair, the singer; Lyn Cooper, athlete, the holder of many Australian track records. Recently an aborigine ballet was presented in Melbourne and received excellent critical notices.

No matter how slight his color strain may be, he is always an aborigine according to the "Act," which is the only reference the aborigine makes to the laws governing him. The *pub,* the measure of the Australian taboo, and often its culture as well, is closed to the aborigine. He is always the *black-feller* if not the damn *nigger!* Recent press stories of harsh treatment they are still receiving in the *out-back* and the Northern Territory, only indicts too well the current practicioners of white democracy on people of other pigmentations.

They have been exploited by everybody, from the Chinese, the Malays and Japanese, who ran the *beche-de-mer* and trocus luggers around Cape York, to the missionaries, who often ran their own jails for the aborigines; and lastly, but thoroughly, by the Australian pastoralists. For any infraction, such as going on a *walkabout,* back to his native home, he has been sent to Palm Island penal colony, near Townsville, in Northern Queensland.

Only the Labor Government on a Federal basis can alter the "Act," make the aborigines full-fledged citizens, like the Maoris of New Zealand—and not the wards of each State. Like the United States, Australia has it own dirty linen hanging out on the line, but smearing the critics will not wash it clean.

INTERNATIONAL PRESS

SOME FACTS ABOUT THE RUHR

The following impressions of technical and working conditions in the Ruhr by a British miner who was one of the party of miners who recently visited the Ruhr at the invitation of the National Coal Board, appeared in the London *Economist* of August 30, 1947:

One of the first things that impressed me during my visit was the wonderful efficiency of the haulage system. The main roads are all driven at pre-determined levels, which means that they are all straight and level, and not undulating as they are in this country. Locomotives are in general use (diesel, electric and compressed air), and in the pits I visited I noticed a complete absence of ropes (endless, main and tail or direct). This system of haulage eliminates a considerable amount of labour and is very much safer; haulage accidents are reduced to a minimum. In the shaft bottom, after the full tubs are detached from the locomotives, they gravitate slowly to the shaft side. From my own personal experience I can testify that there is only one-tenth of the personnel employed in handling tubs at the pit bottom or pit top in the Ruhr compared with the British pits.

At the coal face also the Germans are far in advance of us; wherever possible a machine is used to lighten laborious tasks. On the surface the dirt, when it is extracted from the coal, is sent back down the pit and not littered all over the countryside in huge ugly dumps. The dirt is crushed small and is blown into the wastes through six-inch pipes, packing the wastes solid. This in turn maintains better roof conditions at the coal face. We saw the now famous coal plough. I would say that conditions have to be almost perfect for this machine to be effective; but it certainly was very effective where I saw it, and it was filling a tremendous amount of coal.

The living condition of the German miners are, generally speaking, terrible. This is mainly due, of course, to war damage. They are erecting for the miners, Nissen huts, which, with their internal fittings compare very favourably with our own temporary pre-fabs. But they are not being put on prepared sites, and no roadways are being laid.

Output is very low in the Ruhr, particularly when one remembers the higher proportion of men actually engaged on coal filling and machine mining, which is so much more highly developed than in this country. The low output, in my opinion, is due entirely to the rations the German miner receives. As a heavy worker he is entitled to a much higher ration than the ordinary consumer, but he never gets it. He does get every day a bowl of soup (vegetable, not meat) at the colliery canteen and two slices of nearly black bread with some kind of sausage meat between them. But we saw hundreds of children going to the pits with their fathers, who gave the children the sandwiches to take home. The food is really atrocious, and I am certain it would be difficult to find one British miner who would eat it, let alone work on it.

The two main conclusions I have drawn from my visit are: firstly, I

think it is hopeless to try to improve the output per man-shift until the rations are improved; secondly, in Germany far more money was put back into the collieries to improve them and install new machines than there ever was in this country. If we had progressed in the last 25 years on the same scale as the Germans, there would be no British coal crisis to-day.

STATESMEN AND PHILOSOPHY

Le Peuple, central organ of the Belgian Socialist Party, published an editorial ("False Issues") by its editor-in-chief Victor Larock in its July 10, 1947 number which is extremely interesting in view of the current rethinking of basic philosophical problems that is being carried on in a number of European socialist parties.

Ideologies, Mr. Larock writes, are still very much in the news. Maurice Thorez recently attacked Leon Blum for allegedly "trying to make Socialist workers accept the primacy of spirit over matter." Now Ernest Bevin, invited to celebrate American Independence Day, felt it necessary to engage in a philosophic bout to honor his American hosts: "The conflict which presently develops in the world is the following: on the one hand a materialist conception of history; on the other we Anglo-Saxons who believe in freedom."

Matter, spirit, materialism, freedom: this is indeed an attempt to lift the level of current debates. Who, in the face of this, would dare say that ideas are not taken seriously in the world!

It seems actually that men have changed very little since they butchered one another because they could not agree on predestination and free will. Poor August Comte, who claimed more than a century ago that humanity had now entered the positive age, the age of science! In fact we are yet far from even that elementary science which consists in not taking abstractions for realities and simple words for true ideas.

Has the experience of two world wars taught us nothing? The first was supposed to insure the triumph of "right" over "force." The peoples believed in the slogans. The peace which followed, however, opened their eyes. New slogans had to be devised for the next one.

The Second World War was supposed to be that of "democracy" against "dictatorship." It has not taken long to reveal that democracy itself as understood by certain victorious and liberated states strangely resembles dictatorial regimes.

The Third World War, if it occurs, will probably be one of "spirit" against "matter" or of "freedom" against "historical materialism." Thorez stands for matter and Blum for spirit.

We have become accustomed to these meaningless antithesis—especially in literature. Pascal has castigated them, but he confined himself to the field of literature. In politics — the times being what they are — this kind of ideological camouflage is risky business. Public opinion already is too divided and too eager to find additional reasons for conflict. It is a dangerous game to nourish this discord with so-called doctrinal oppositions which are really nothing but oppositions of words.

What is "matter" and what is "spirit"? For 25 centuries, from before Socrates to Karl Marx and beyond, these words evoked clear, summary and well-defined notions. But those notions were false.

When our statesmen fling these

words at each other, they do not seem to realize that experimental science has made some progress in the last 50 years and such words, if they still make any sense whatever, cover a complex of phenomena and incertitudes of which Marx, Feuerbach, Hegel or the "atomists" of antiquity never dreamed.

Unfortunately, though the concepts have altered radically, the words have not. And the statesmen, as well as the masses they address, continue to accord them an absolute value which they lost a long time ago.

I recall a meeting of the French Philosophical Society attended by Langevin, de Broglie, Lalande and other prominent French thinkers. All agreed on one point: between the concepts employed in current language and those which science uses to describe the intimate reality of things, there is no longer any common measure. Our language is heavily ladden with old errors, antiquated notions.

Thorez is scarcely concerned with this. Truth is a matter for the philosophers. Thorez' job is simply to denounce Leon Blum to Socialist workers as one who, revolting against Marx, takes the side of "spirit" against "matter." How can the Socialist workers fail to be indignant? Well, if they, unlike Thorez, have no philosophic sense, they should at least have a sense of fidelity.

How right Marx was, however, when he noted that it was necessary to draw a distinction between himself and certain so-called Marxists.

And in regard to Bevin, why did he not simply say that Anglo-Saxons prefer their traditional liberties to Soviet totalitarianism? Why bring in "historical materialism" and thus play into the hands of the Stalinists who on every occasion pretend to speak in its name? Maybe Bevin simply wanted to "needle" Laski. Nevertheless his statement, which was carried by all the press agencies, was regrettable.

Historical materialism has no connection with totalitarian despotism. Bevin seems to confound Marx with Thomas Hobbes. Historical materialism is nothing but a method of explanation which holds that the general evolution of human societies depends upon the evolution of the forms of ownership and production. It bases itself on the rather well grounded observation that economic factors are preponderant. It never claimed that they are the *only* factors or that history unfolds itself in an implacable display of material forces, in the face of which collective and individual will is practically non-existent. If this kind of social fatalism had been the last word of Marxism then the whole life of Marx, who fought unflinchingly for a more just and rational order, would be reduced to an absurdity.

Historical materialism exposes the *illusions* of freedom, but far from negating freedom it attempts, through a most realistic explanation of the past, to render available the means for mankind's conquest of the future. This is what Bevin should have explained to his American audience. But then one must not demand too much from statesmen—especially from those who are farthest removed from any ideology.

A DEMOCRATIC EUROPEAN FEDERATION

The French left-wing Socialist magazine *Masses* (June-July 1947) publishes an article by Michel Collinet under the above title dealing exhaustively with the position of Europe in the world of today. In view of the topical importance of this question

and as a further contribution to the discussion which was begun by Raymond Aron in the September issue of *Modern Review,* we present the following excerpts from Mr. Collinet's article.

The class struggle (declares Mr. Collinet) is an historic fact and not an invention by Marx, as the defenders of privilege would have us believe. Many of Marx' forerunners had "discovered" it. What distinguishes Marx is that he sees in the class struggle a normal occurrence, a proof of the normality and health of a society in progress. For him, the class struggle is the motive force of history.

Now it seems that this thesis is in need of revision. To be sure, society can be thought of as composed of stratified layers, social classes. Class struggles then take place between these layers in a *vertical* sense, culminating politically in a change in the order and structure of the classes. But this description suffices only for societies that are isolated or sufficiently strong not to have to fear outside intervention. But what about those gigantic military clashes between civilizations which for long historical periods have shaken classes as well as whole societies? For more than 40 centuries the history of mankind revolved around the struggle between nomadic and sedentary peoples! The days of invasion by nomadic tribes is over, but we still have with us the types of conflict which—in order to distinguish them from class struggles —we may call *horizontal* conflicts. Feudal wars, dynastic, commercial, national, imperialist wars and finally wars for existence all belong to this category. All such wars take place between powers which have their own classes and their own hierarchical structure.

Why then did Marx talk only of class struggles and not of the conflicts of powers? Because Marx saw in the development of the capitalist mode of production, the increasing division of labor, the increase of world trade, factors for international pacification. He writes in the *Manifesto*: "... the bourgeoisie has eliminated the national basis of industry." Astonishing optimism even for that day!

Yet Marx had some justification for this view. From 1815 until 1914 Europe knew only localized wars which in no way endangered the structure of social classes. The 19th century was indeed the century of class struggles and at the same time that of a society in full development in which power conflicts played only a minor part. But in Europe today the class struggle is buried under the ruins accumulated by fascism and war, and by the "revolution from above."

If social revolutions, which are the consequences of the class struggle, upset certain layers of society or even eliminate them, power conflicts can bring the same results. The Aryan invasions of antiquity created new hierarchies, new classes in the vanquished societies. In Poland the Nazis destroyed the Jews and liberal bourgeoisie; the Soviet occupation authorities in Germany eliminated the Junkers and landholders as a class.

The First World War did not of itself accomplish any great social upheaval. The bourgeoisie of the victorious countries tried, on the contrary, to preserve the social position of its counterpart in the vanquished nations. On the other hand, the democratic regimes which arose after the war were not overthrown by the onslaught of the proletariat: they succumbed to the fact that a national political structure which would have

been progressive in 1848 had become profoundly reactionary in 1920. The formidable development of productive forces should have exploded national frontiers. But this was not the case and when the economic crisis reached the European States those very same parliaments which in the 19th century were the sanctuaries of adolescent nationalism became centers of decomposition. Social problems could no longer be resolved by the nationalist bourgeoisie.

A unified capitalist Europe could not have avoided the crisis; but Europe would have been preserved from its nationalist and fascist repercussions. If there had been revolutionary upheavals, they would have been led into class struggle channels. The absence of class struggle, the nationalist structure of the labor movement, however, prevented any progressive outcome and made the unification of Europe under the boot of the fascists the only possible solution of the crisis.

Thus we witnessed the rise of the totalitarian regimes of the Nazi and Stalinist type. What separates these regimes from bourgeois society is the fact that in them the central political role is no longer played by social classes but by a unique political organization, the Party. The totalitarian party constitutes a sacredotal hierarchically organized caste. It penetrates all the tissues of the social body and thus prevents the different classes from constituting themselves as such and from acting as classes. It atomizes the class of the managers as well as the working class. It depersonalizes each individual and conditions his reflexes by propaganda. In the totalitarian universe, society can all the more readily be absorbed by the State because of the elimination of private property. When the apologists say that the USSR is a classless society one can make this more precise by saying that the USSR is a State without Society—a State in which classes, economically defined, exist only within the State, as State Classes. Marx saw in the State an appendage of Society; in the totalitarian universe Society has become an appendage of the State.

When Hitler by force liquidated European nationalism, it emerged again and even acquired a popular content which it had lacked for years. But this Indian Summer could not last. By 1920 the rebirth of European national states could lead only to a reactionary feudalization; the balkanized Europe of today is in a much worse condition than it was in 1920. The multiplication of politico-economic frontiers is incompatible with the level of productive forces. Every state tends to barricade itself behind customs barriers and border lines, but this can only lead to a kind of perpetuation of national misery. It is claimed that nationalization would raise the level of productivity. But nationalization within the present national framework can accomplish little more than a nationalization of misery. Even an integral socialization within this framework would bring no solution. It would be condemned to futility, just as was the communist experiment of the Anabaptist leader Jean de Leyde in the single town of Munster in 1531.

It is impossible for any European nation to overcome its economic misery in isolation. Furthermore the problem between nations today is no longer a problem of competition but of existence—witness the fate of Poland. In a sense one might say that the whole of Europe is now in the process of becoming another Poland. Europe suffers not only from a mate-

rial ruin that provokes political decay, it has in addition become a strategic position in the world struggle between Russia and the United States.

One might say that the 19th century was the century in which economic forces determined political relations. The conception of the primacy of economics common to the liberals and Marxists was rooted in the optimism inspired by the development of industry. This conception pushed to its logical ends implies for Marxism the theory of the class struggle (each class being animated by its economic interests), and the Marxist theory of the State as the political apparatus of the economically dominant class. But this makes sense only if the productive forces are independent of human will, a manifestation of destiny. It is clear that the situation tends to change radically in the 20th century. Everywhere we witness the growth of regimented and controlled economies, conscious direction takes the place of statistical automatism, chess takes the place of baccarat. The 20th century is the Century of Politics.

The possession of state power thus becomes an end in itself, and the State, formerly a simple policeman in the service of productive forces, becomes their all powerful master. The State, which according to Marx was to wither away once the proletariat had cut off its bureaucratic and repressive claws, was the liberal state. Today the bureaucratic state with its totalitarian tendencies arises from the ruins of the liberal state. The "conscience of necessity" of which Engles spoke is no longer the "leap into freedom" but a leap into resigned or enthusiastic servitude. The hypertrophy of the State, whether cause or effect, is certainly in proportion to the terrifying decline of human morality which we witness today. Total wars and total earthquakes break up civilizations, transforming Man from end into means and the State from a means into an end.

Rome had a parasitic social layer, the *plebs,* who, instead of producing for society was simply maintained by it. The existence of the *plebs* was made possible through the institution of slavery, the slaves being the producers on whom society lived. The historians are unanimous in attributing the fall of Rome to this structure of its society. Modern Europe shows many analogous characteristics. World wars, capitalist crisis and fascism have created the germs of a society where resigned slaves coexist with militarized *plebs.* In our days ruin and misery have eliminated millions from production—millions who now live by the traffic of influence, by more or less illegal transactions and who elbow each others at the doors of the State. As an excess of white blood corpuscles circulating in the blood, the excess of parasites with undeterminable economic functions in the social body is a sign of infection. And no class is free from the infection. There are big rake-offs and small tips in the dance of billions. The plebeian and servile spirit are combined in all social classes. This causes an often desperate agitation which is always sterile in its contradictions — first hostile to the state and finally submissive to it.

The working class which for a century was the carrier of the highest human values and whose fight brought about the greatest human progress is today in its majority subjugated and paralyzed by a political machine whose aims can only be compared to that of the totalitarian powers of yesterday and today.

This is the pest-ridden bog in which most European nations struggle today. Germany represents the incarnate

nothingness: the totalitarian state has destroyed society and the war has destroyed the state. Everywhere on this continent misery, chaos, demoralization create a nothingness in which totalitarian dictatorship and imperialist war can find their abode.

The criterion by which one can measure the political independence of a nation is whether it can determine its social structure without fear of foreign intervention. This is no longer the case with the nations of Europe. The continent is at the mercy of imperialist enterprises and only the Russo-American antagonism creates a precarious balance in the West of Europe allowing the appearances of democracy. Western Europe is caught between the Soviet hammer and the American anvil. There is no social development in any country which is not determined or deformed by the world conflict of the two Big Powers. But this subordination is the greater, the more insoluble the economic and political problems of each country. The chances for Europe to survive as an autonomous civilization are slight in any case; they are non-existent if Europe fails to unify.

The revolutionary socialist unification of Europe according to Lenin's ideas was defeated in 1920. The capitalist unification of Europe according to Briand was abandoned in 1930. It may not yet be too late to realize unification by peaceful and democratic means, but it is already too late to build a Europe able to defend itself against both world powers. A unified Europe cannot be built without the aid of American capitalism. One may regret that it will not be born as a socialist federation in the glow of a proletarian 1848, but one cannot deny that this is no longer a historical possibility. It is in this respect also that the responsibility of Stalin is terrifying. Stalinist Russia and the parties which constitute its shock troops all over Europe have had the main responsibility for making any autonomous unification of Europe impossible. Europe now cannot be unified against the USA. This is the measure of its defeat. The last war marked not only the defeat of Germany but the defeat of all Europe. In the eyes of all sensible people, especially of the citizens of America, Europe is today a huge cemetery inhabitated by madmen! If the democrats and socialists of Europe do not rapidly leave their national shells and begin to work together to save the rotting ship into which water pours from a thousand leaks, it will be too late.

FRANCE'S MISDIRECTED ECONOMY

Robert Louzon, writing in the excellent French syndicalist review *La Revolution Proletarienne* (June 1947), cites a particularly glaring example of bureaucratic mismanagement involving France's wheat supply and analyzes the myth that a planned economy means *ipso facto* an efficient economy.

France (he writes) is now without wheat and practically without bread—or at least the commodity which formerly was called bread. Only a few years before the war French farmers were forced to feed wheat to their animals because the abundant French harvest surpassed the needs of the population. Is unfavorable weather the reason for this strange "about face"? Decidely not! The last harvest was better than average. The fault lies exclusively with the kind of directed economy that France has at present.

Today there is too little wheat in the world. Frenchman are big bread

eaters. French agriculture, therefore, should produce as much wheat as possible. In a free, undirected, "anarchic" economy this would come about most naturally. The price of wheat would have gone up because of the short supply; the farmer therefore would have been able to get more for his wheat than for other products, and would thus have been eager to switch over to wheat production. But we live under a directed economy. The state pegged the price of wheat — *below* the price of other agricultural products. The price of cereals is less than five times the price of pre-war days whereas all food prices together stand at nearly ten times pre-war prices. (March indices: cereals, 489; all foods, 945!) In other words the farmers can only realize less by producing what is most needed.

The result: During the campaign of 1945 - 6 he sowed only 4 million hectares of wheat instead of the 5 million planted in 1938 (i.e. 20 per cent less). This year the situation became catastrophic. In 1946 - 7 only 3,400,000 hectares were sown (i.e. 32 per cent less than the 1938 figure).

And this is why France has no bread!

Mr. Louzon goes on to assert that any kind of planned intervention can only distort the normal laws of offer and demand and will thus necessarily disturb the working of the economic mechanism. Never, he declares, is the price imposed by the state a just price, a price corresponding to value, because if it were the state would have no need to fix it. The state can manage prices for a certain time, but — except in the case of a totalitarian regime — cannot succeed in the long run and equilibrium re-establishes itself.

However one may question the free enterprisers' thesis that all planning is bad planning, one must admit that Mr. Louzon has produced a telling example of the fact that not all planning is necessarily rational or efficient.

HEADLINE IN MANCHESTER GUARDIAN

"TREAT WAR AS DANGER TO PEACE"

MEET THE PSYCHOLOGISTS

It apparently did not occur to Hitler that he was conquering a whole country (Austria) in order to revenge himself on his father . . . —David Abrahamson in *Men, Mind and Power.*

NEW WORLD A'COMIN?

In a London cafe to-day a waitress said: "We're not serving bread, sir. Would you like some cake?—*Manchester Guardian.*

NICE OF 'EM

We think of her not as a European, but as a person with all the characteristics of true greatness.—*Pan-Africa,* London.

BOOKS

THE CONCENTRATION CAMP AS A CLASS STATE

Bruno Bettelheim

This report is based mainly on two recent books about German concentration camps and also on the writer's own camp experiences. The books are Kautsky's *Teufel und Verdammte* (*Devils and Damned*) and Kogon's *Der SS-Staat* (*The SS-State*).[1] Both titles are well chosen. While the SS ran Germany as if it were its own state, it also constituted a state in its own right, and had a private little experimental state of its own — the concentration camps. In this miniature state the SS formed only the top layer —the ruling and not working aristocracy. Below it, in descending order were the higher and lower levels of a prisoner hierarchy who did all the work for the SS. The top level of the prisoner hierarchy consisted of the *doyens* of the camps; the blockleaders who often "ruled" the lives of several hundred prisoners in the barracks; and the *Kapos*—shop managers who often assigned and supervised many hundreds of prisoners while at work. They were followed by a "middle class" of prisoners composed of clerics, camp police and so on. Below them was the great "working class" of skilled and semi-skilled labor and finally a sub-stratum of Jews, Poles and Russians often condemned by the SS to be "worked to death." They were occasionally forced to sacrifice their lives so that the prisoner aristocracy might survive. These classes were not based on economic services rendered to society and therefore were not anchored in significant functions. They represented a hierarchical order dependent on the whims of the ruling SS despots, on whom most members of the prisoner aristocracy had to fawn in order to retain their position of affluence, some few noteworthy cases notwithstanding in which members of the "ruling" prisoner aristocracy defied some SS men in the interest of other prisoners.

The working of this complex hierarchy which was entirely dependent on the SS, proved that not only could a few SS men actually rule tens of thousands of hostile prisoners, but that it could even induce such prisoners to work and control others for them without ever becoming dangerous. In this microcosm, the SS also experimented with methods which, when successful and feasible, were then applied to the macrocosm—Germany. The microcosm was inhabited by devils and damned, but it was not always easy to decide who were the devils and who the damned. Kautsky obviously means the SS when referring to devils in his title, but there were also many devils among the

[1] *Teufel und Verdammte* by Benedict Kautsky. Büchergilde Gutenberg, Zürich, 1946. *Der SS-Staat* by Eugen Kogon. Verlag der Frankfurter Hefte, Frankfurt-am-Main, 1946.

BRUNO BETTELHEIM was born in Vienna and received his Ph.D. from the University of Vienna. After the annexation of Austria in 1938, he was sent to Dachau and then to Buchenwald for his anti-fascist convictions. Released in 1939, he came to this country. He is now Associate Professor of Education and Principal of the Orthogenic School at the University of Chicago.

"damned" and at least a few angels among the "devils."

Horror Aspects of the Camps

These remarks are not meant to give the impression that the two books deal primarily with the class structure of the camps. On the contrary, they contain abundant material on the mistreatment of prisoners, on experimentation with human beings, and on the attitudes of the SS. Much of it has appeared in previous reports, and forms part of the official documents used against prominent National-Socialists in the Nuremburg trials.

Therefore, I shall not further elaborate on the tortures inflicted on prisoners, on their degradation and suffering, nor on all other horrors which took place behind the moats and charged fences. They are reported in detail by the authors, and similar descriptions are readily available. They would, in fact, be common knowledge by now if most persons did not prefer to safeguard their peace of mind and the soundness of their sleep, by repressing all memory of such data. Bringing the inhumanity of the camps to their attention once more will serve little purpose. They will again repress it, and for good reason—getting excited about evils one can no longer remedy seems pointless.

Therefore, I prefer to discuss a special aspect of the camps, although it forms only part of the authors' reports, namely, the class structure of camp society. I have singled this out because it is one of the most significant aspects of the camps, with bearing on persisting social phenomena.

Fiction vs. Reality

Earlier publications on German concentration camps, such as Langhoff's *Rubber Truncheon,* created the impression that prisoners in the camps were a comradely group of staunch democrats, socialists and communists, all of whom helped one another, were unified by their hatred of fascism, and morally superior to their torturers, the SS. Although it was known that not all prisoners in the concentration camps were politically aware, and that scattered among them were criminals and even former SS men, these facts were ignored as though by common consent. While the Nazis were in power, nothing but favorable comments were permissable about their victims, each of whom was accepted as an anti-fascist hero. This is not astonishing if one recalls that any nation by virtue of German attack automatically became a "democratic and peace loving" state, however dictatorial its government may have been.

All former inmates of concentration camps knew perfectly well that reality was far different from such popularly held notions. Now that the SS no longer rules Germany and the camps, these other aspects can be discussed more freely. But even when that is done, as in the two books under discussion, there is still a great deal of hesitation and much white-washing of the prisoners and their oppressive class society. Such an attitude is the result of a general tendency to simplify reality, as in Kautsky's title, by making it a dichotomy of good and evil, of seeing men either as devils or angels. If further refutation of such a naive viewpoint were necessary, the two books in question would provide it. The notion of a prisoner society free from guilt and an SS full of guilt was probably upheld in an effort to deny first, that the Hitler system could contaminate even its opponents, and second, that the Hitler system was based on tendencies present in every

human being, oppressed as well as oppressor—tendencies which are easily activated if social and individual controls are not only removed but a premium put on their elimination and if men live in continuous deprivation and fear of torture and death. It is also interesting to observe how much Communist prisoners had in common with SS guards, both subscribing to a belief in their "superior" calling and in strict obedience and submission to party doctrine. Each believed in their right to take advantage of "inferiors," although their conceptions of "inferiors" were different.

The Internal Structure

Both books describe the inner organization of the camps in some detail: how it came about that prisoners to a large degree ran the camps for the SS; how this permitted them to establish a hierarchically ordered class society; how this class structure made life miserable if not literally insufferable for those who could not lift themselves out of the lowest class of prisoner society; how prisoners who hoped to rise into the higher strata betrayed or tortured fellow prisoners; how one group conspired against another to replace them in their positions; and how in so doing they accepted to a large degree as their own, Gestapo values and manners of behavior. The authors offer no opinion as to whether this last was the result of mimicry, of an effort to outsmart the Gestapo, or of a common way of looking at matters.

Recognition of the concentration camp as a class-structured society is a comparatively late achievement and one may speculate as to why it took so long to see the obvious. Prisoners who before entering the camps had been middle or upper class citizens of modern "democratic" societies were those most likely to report on their experiences. It may be that such men wished to overlook class structure in a setting in which only its most vicious aspects become apparent. Then too, almost all those who survived the camps and could therefore report on their experiences had in one way or another been beneficiaries of a class system whose lowest strata rarely survived. None of the reports thus far published by German Communists or fellow travelers stress the class nature of the camps — perhaps because the writers had frequently been members of the ruling class — perhaps because of their cooperation with the SS in running the camps. The fact that German Communists did not always rule the camps, but had periodically to be satisfied with a secondary role below that of German criminal prisoners does not exonerate them, because even then they had but one goal in mind—to displace the latter as a ruling class.

Vantage Point of Privilege

The authors' own attitudes with regard to their middle or upper class positions in this class state are quite revealing. Kautsky and Kogon, despite their great differences in viewpoint, discuss the camp's class structure with some criticism. Interestingly enough, both are Austrians. Thus their nationality prevented them from ever becoming members of the top ruling class which consisted only of gentile Germans, and also removed them one step from identifying with matters German. This may have facilitated a relative objectivity. The Christian Democrat Kogon, whose party upheld class differentiation, also held the more prominent position in the camp. As private secretary to a camp physician, he was a leading participant in medical experiments on prisoners dur-

ing which most of them died. In this capacity, he enjoyed many advantages such as good food, shelter, rest, light work and relative security at a time when many of his fellow prisoners were "worked to death" on Gestapo orders and many more died of slow starvation. He was closely bound both to the SS and to all other "elite prisoners," who enjoyed similar privileges. One can therefore understand why he makes a great bid for sympathy in the matter of class discrimination among prisoners; he goes practically all the way in condoning Communist prisoners' cooperation with the Gestapo and their efforts to kill off German criminal prisoners, with whom a constant struggle for power was waged. He explains the most vicious actions of Communists as clever ruses. The heading of Chapter Nineteen, for example, reads: "The Permanent Underground Fight Between the SS and the Anti-Fascist Forces in the Camp." Actually, the chapter deals with the fight among various groups of prisoners for the favor of the SS, for the right to rule, control, and when expedient for their own security, to mistreat or kill other prisoners. This dog fight, usually fought primarily for personal and secondarily for group benefits, is distorted into a principled fight between SS and anti-fascists.

Kogon has nothing but contempt both for lower class prisoners and for SS guards or uneducated SS officers. On this basis he found himself associated with Dr. Ding-Schuler, the SS physician whose secretary he became. In this book, everything is seen from the vantage point of the group of prominent prisoners to whom he belonged and who did not hesitate to send prisoners of an opposing group to their death. Never does he report things as they appeared to those who were sacrificed to make easier or more secure the life of the prisoner-elite. He thinks it only natural and entirely justified that when he was threatened with being sent to another camp, he was given space in a room reserved for prisoners suffering from T. B. There he remained for months, other prominent prisoners even for years. He makes no mention of the fact that with the few places in the sick room occupied by healthy prisoners, many others less influential died of T. B. because there was no place for them in the sick room supposedly reserved for their need. His connection with Dr. Ding-Schuler was so close that during the last days before liberation, the latter spirited him out of the camp in return for the promise of future protection against allied prosecution.

Shadows of Guilt

Kogon is not without a sense of guilt about the advantages he enjoyed; therefore, he feels he must justify them. This he does as members of ruling classes for centuries have done —by pointing to his greater value to society, because of education and cultural refinement. He was pleased with himself, because in the still of the night he read Plato and Galsworthy, while in an adjacent room, housing "hardly sufferable comrades" (p. 103), the air reeked of common prisoners' dirty clothing, and they snored unpleasantly. He fails to admit that only his privileged position permitted him the leisure to enjoy culture—an enjoyment he uses to justify his advantages. Actually, he was able to read at night because he was neither poorly clothed, nor utterly exhausted, nor starved. Such thoughtless attitudes of superiority are clearly revealed when he says (p. 304) "with

regard to the psychology of the prisoners . . . psychological complications of importance resulted only in those who were of higher value as individuals, as groups, or as classes." At another point he remarks that the educated classes were, after all, not prepared for life in the concentration camps. The implication seems to be that the uneducated classes were prepared for (or suited to) such a life.

In justice to Kogon, it should be said that these critical remarks do not represent a fair picture of all of his attitudes, since other sections of the book show a compassion for the *miserables* in the camp, even if they are always seen from his superior class position. But when this position is threatened, everything is justified—including the extermination of opposing prisoners groups by satellites of upper class inmates or by obliging SS officers, such as Dr. Hoven. The latter willingly exterminated prisoners who were pointed out to him as undesirables by the ruling prisoner group. Through his agency, all persons considered dangerous to them were ordered into the sick room and exterminated. He had no personal interest in doing so. It was just one of the small favors which one master did for members of another ruling group.

While Kogon is in accord with this, he is quite critical of the killing of prisoners for other than class reasons. He regretted one of the ruling prisoners' declaring another prisoner insane simply because he was annoyed by the latter's depression for a few days following bad news from home. The ruling prisoner, a blockleader, had him transported into the sick barracks to be killed by injections although his victim knew what had been planned for him and made violent objection. Four prisoners, clerks and roomservants (*Stubendienst*), had to hold him, by order of the blockleader, so that the deadly injection might be administered. This was only one of many cases in which prisoners were killed without any reason or political animosity but simply because they had annoyed some member of the prisoner aristocracy.

It was only logical that such freedom to kill was used by ruling groups not only to maintain power, but also to square old grudges. When in power, Communists directed their hatred primarily against former members of the Communist Opposition (the Brandler group, for example), and of the Independent Socialist Party of Germany. A favorite butt of their aggressions were Trotskyites of all persuasions, but they also hunted down Social-Democrats, particularly before the war and during the existence of the German-Russian friendship pact. After official Communism ceased to view the war as one of imperialistic powers against one another but one of democracies against fascism, the Communist prisoner elite entered into "popular front" agreements with other middle and rightist prisoner groups. But this they did uneasily. To the last, it was as if Communists not only sought to use their power to get even with their old political enemies, but also to ensure that no group would remain as a possible contender for power within Germany after the anticipated revolution.

Lower and Middle Class View

The Social-Democrat, Kautsky, is considerably more critical in his evaluation of camp society. At first, he was a lowest class prisoner, a "political Jew." Only during the last years of the camp was he elevated to the

middle class position of gentile political prisoner.

Kautsky suffered much more than Kogon in the camp because he never really belonged to the prisoner elite. Nevertheless, or perhaps therefore, he is much more objective in evaluating both prisoners and Gestapo. He stresses the existence of at least a few SS men who not only behaved decently, but who unselfishly risked their own promotion and well being in order to help prisoners. He refers to one SS sergeant who never made anti-Semitic remarks, who never hit prisoners, or reported them to be punished. To such men, he always spoke courteously. There were other SS men who risked their lives by smuggling letters out of the camps for prisoners, without expecting any reward. Certainly they constituted a small minority, but so did the decent prisoners.

Observing humanity in even a few SS men helped Kautsky to understand that the tortures committed in the camps were not solely the result of sadistic tendencies on the part of a few perverted individuals. He recognized the true function of the concentration camps within a regime based on terror. In speaking of the guards, he makes the important observation that the situation in the camps was made considerably more difficult precisely because the guards were not sadists, but generally average men anxious for promotion. Mistreating prisoners was to them as good as showing one's allegiance to the regime. Most SS men never wasted a minute of their free time in mistreating a prisoner; their laziness was one of the prisoners' best protections. Such behavior is alien to sadists who *enjoy* mistreating others.

Objectivity in evaluating SS attitudes, together with a socialist viewpoint, permitted Kautsky to recognize the class structure within the camps.

Such a class structure, similar to the pecking order of chickens, was revealed by the nature of social contacts between the classes. On cold or rainy days, non-commissioned officers who were supposed to supervise the prisoners often congregated in their barracks to take things easy. Commissioned SS officers on inspection duty would chase them out to work. At that, the latter went into barracks where prominent prisoners were relaxing, to kick them out and take over their hiding place. These, in turn, descended on middle class prisoners who were trying to protect themselves against the weather under open shelters, or around a burning fire. Cooperation between SS men and prominent prisoners even extended, on other occasions, to their doing "guard" duty to warn SS men of approaching SS officers.

Such protective services were also performed by "good" prisoner foremen for their labor group. Good foremen were expected to shout that prisoners were lazy good-for-nothings when an SS man approached, thus warning them to be on their guard. Rewards for such protection took the form of money, cigarettes, pieces of clothing, or services such as cleaning the foreman's clothing, or making his bed for him. Others who could not offer money might gain positions of favor by entertaining their superiors, as in any other class society.

Intricacies of Class Relationships

Social contacts of another nature also illustrate the class structure. An SS man might accept a bribe or a favor such as newspapers or cigaretes from a prominent prisoner in good grace; he might discuss political matters with him, and the prisoner might

even dare to express carefully and guardedly critical opinions of camp matters, if such opinions coincided with those of the SS men. On the other hand, a common prisoner could not bribe or render favor to an SS man, who would simply take what he wanted and reward the prisoner with a slap or kick; neither would an SS man lower himself to discuss politics with him.

Thus while classes just one step removed from each other might have some kind of social interchange, the most violent hatred was directed against classes which were more than one step below one's own standing. This held true not only for the guards, but for the prisoners as well. An upper class prisoner was likely to despise and mistreat lower class prisoners. He had to be more careful with middle class prisoners. They dared assert themselves more, because they had many middle class, and usually some upper class friends whose "clients" they were, and who had elevated them into middle class positions and protected them.

The situation of the prisoner aristocracy was ambiguous from its very beginning. Prisoner foremen and blockleaders could use their positions to protect some prisoners, but in order to retain their positions they had to serve the SS. Besides the welfare of other prisoners, their own self interest demanded that they retain their positions at all cost. Since they were not infrequently punished for what the SS called misbehavior of their blocks, or the poor labor of their labor groups, they had an interest in protecting themselves by trying to anticipate the wishes of the SS, in some cases by fawning upon or outdoing the SS. While this was the attitude of the majority of the trusties, a few outstanding persons used their positions daringly and unselfishly for the protection of the prisoners. There were a few super-foremen who successfully interfered with SS men mistreating prisoners, but they were the exception, since such actions demanded extraordinary courage.

Thus the position of the prisoner aristocracy had a double aspect from the start: they could protect some prisoners, and they could protect them the better, the better they served the Gestapo, because their positions were then more secure. Thus to exercise a protective function for themselves and others, they had to control if not to suppress the majority of the prisoners for the SS.

The process whereby prisoner trusties became more powerful coincided with the start of the Gestapo's experimentation with human beings and the extermination policy. D. Rousset in his report on experiences in the camps (*Politics,* July-August 1947, p. 158) makes the point that once the hospital foremen could dispense typhoid serum, they could give it to those who needed it, and thus preserve their lives, they could withhold it from those who needed it, and they could give a lethal dose to those whom they wished to eliminate. A position of power in the camp was *always* a position of being able to protect *and* to kill, hardly ever one of being able to protect *or* to kill, because without killing one's enemies one did not retain power. This made the position and the policies of all members of the ruling prisoner group even more ambiguous. When Communists were in power matters were even more complicated, for their leaders always remained in the background, while Party discipline required Communist foremen and blockleaders to execute

their orders. Because the latter were those who held the actual power invested in them by the Gestapo, they often came into conflict with the officially powerless leaders of their organization. All these tensions added to the already almost insufferable pressure of anxiety which made the life of every prisoner unbearable.

Like all ruling classes, the prisoner aristocracy, whether Communist or not, eventually lost all empathy with the fate, the feeling and thinking, the experiences and suffering of lower class prisoners. They no longer understood what it did to them to be exposed to the worst hardships of the camp, to hard labor, bad weather, no rest and no chance to care for their bodily needs. They criticized lower class prisoners, for instance, for their lack of constraint which threatened the camp with disease and epidemics! Kautsky disparages them for drinking contaminated water at a time when nothing but boiled water should have been used, and for eating refuse. What he neglects to mention is that privileged prisoners had adequate supplies of food and boiled water at their disposal and therefore had an easier time restraining themselves.

I recall having been shocked on entering Buchenwald to see the dirty bodies of the so-called asocial prisoners (Gypsies, hoboes, etc.) who looked like walking skeletons. I was also repelled to see them eat refuse. But I soon realized that the prisoner group to which I belonged on entering the camps had been well fed and their health well taken care of for anywhere from 20 to 40 years. We thus had a great reserve of physical strength, whereas the asocials, often coming from submarginal strata of society, had no such reserves on which to draw.

The Role of Fear

In the particular setting of the camps, looking down upon lower class prisoners was an important psychological defense against one's own fears. Seeing them implied the threat: "I may become as they are." The only protection against such a fear was to believe that one was made of "different stuff" and therefore could never fall so low. Fear of sinking into the subhuman strata of lower class prisoners provided a strong incentive to fight a class war against them. It could be rationalized because they were actually dangerous—as carriers of disease; because their desperate conditions led them to steal (and even a lower middle class prisoner possessed so little that the loss of a sweater or a loef of bread might have become a matter of life and death to him); and because their desperation and nihilism were infectious. It was difficult to keep up one's own morale, and one hated them because one feared their example. Moreover, they were the expendables; theirs were the most unpleasant work assignments, as with the lowest members of any class society. If prisoners had to be sent into other camps where chances of survival were slim, they were selected by the all-powerful political prisoners who ruled "labor statistics," the department which arranged work assignments. In cases of exodus, as well as those of assigning work, this department was expected to provide a specified number of prisoners for the SS. Whom the prisoners working there selected was up to themselves alone. At times, they chose prisoners whom they wanted to get rid of for difficult work assignments although the latter were so sick that the SS physician who looked at them in a most cursory

fashion nevertheless rejected some. Then the ruling prisoners would arrange things so that prisoners to be sent away were mustered in the early morning hours of darkness when the SS physician was not present or could not see very well. Thus to get mixed up with expendable prisoners — or worse, to become one of them — was very dangerous and the dread of every prisoner.

Stimulants to Ambition

While one thus had good reasons to fight for one's middle class position against the lower classes, there were innumerable reasons for making efforts to become an upper class prisoner.

The prizes open to winners in such class battles (which were really just palace intrigues) were indeed high. First, there were the material gains: more than adequate food, living conditions far superior to those of the rest of the prisoners, namely a bed to oneself and usually the privilege of sleeping in the dayroom all by oneself instead of being crowded into a single bedroom with up to a hundred persons. Moreover, the dayroom was heated in winter, a great comfort when compared with the unheated bedroom. Prominent prisoners could provide themselves with excellent clothing, had greater freedom in selecting work assignments, and were often not required to do any work. It should be realized that with regard to food, clothing and leisure time, some of the chiefs of blocks or labor details lived more comfortably in the camps than they had ever lived in liberty, having been unemployed proletarians in a time of depression. In addition, they could satisfy their cultural desires, and even to some degree their sex desires, if they were satisfied with homosexual gratification. In the last years of the camps, heterosexual gratification was accessible in the camp brothels to those middle and upper class prisoners who did not mind the unpleasantness which surrounded them. All these advantages they could enjoy even at times when other prisoners suffered greatest need. Such need was an even greater incentive because there was always the nagging fear: "I may lose my position of power tomorrow. Therefore, I must store in my body as much strength as I can, so that I may then survive."

Below a constantly intriguing ruling class, there lived a fairly stable middle class (if anything in the camp was ever stable), who had less power and enjoyed less benefits. They had just enough to live in relative comfort, but their position was also relatively less envied and hence more secure. Like all middle classes, they had to be subservient to the ruling group, whoever that might be. The middle class consisted, for example, of the foremen, the skilled workers in the shops, the scribes, the attendants in the camp hospitals and other small functionaries. It was quite a large group. In Buchenwald it numbered up to two thousand prisoners at a time when the total number of prisoners was between ten and twenty thousand. Later their number was even greater.

Prisoners of this group, without having the power of the more prominent prisoners, enjoyed many material advantages. They always had enough to eat, had better clothing, and could protect themselves against the weather. Moreover most of them did very little or easy work and had access to treatment when ill.

The main law of the camp was: *Whoever has will be given, and whoever has not, from him will be taken*

away. Often members of the upper middle classes did not even have to do the little work assigned them by the SS because the advantages they enjoyed permitted them to bribe members of the lower classes to do it for them. For instance, upper middle class orderlies in the barracks were supposed to carry and clean the heavy food containers. This job took little time, but was hard and tough. The same orderlies however were also the distributors of food and could, therefore, use some discretion as to who got more or less food. After having served themselves and other elite prisoners, they distributed the remaining portions in such a way that a generous helping or two remained in the containers. These remnants, which should have been distributed equally among all prisoners, they offered to those who would clean the containers for them and carry them back to the kitchen. Because of the general starvation, there were always many prisoners who were only too glad to do such jobs for them in exchange for filling there stomachs. But those who came back exhausted from work had thus to do additional labor to get their fill. Others cleaned their boots or made their beds, gave them money or cigarettes, or rendered other kinds of services in return for additional food which was withheld from the community. And those who paid for such personal services by partially depriving the community of food were not the worst. There were others who even sold food instead of distributing it.

Question of the Main Enemy

Even Kogon, who, during the last years of Buchenwald, was so prominently active in the prisoners' factional fights, admits with resignation that prisoners could have done much more for one another, and the SS would have permitted or condoned it, if the terrible internecine class war among camp factions had not constantly interferred with such efforts. It was a class war in which the German Communists were finally victorious; but the consequences for those whom they ruled were not far different from those which other people seem to experience when subject to one class ruling only in its own class interests.

Basically, only the SS benefited from this class conflict among prisoners, as it seems that in the fully developed mass state of the Hitler type, even the efforts of the suppressed to better their fate work in the favor of their oppressors.

In conclusion I again wish to stress that only one aspect of these and other books on the concentration camp has been discussed, namely, the light they throw (inadvertantly, if I correctly gauge the authors' intentions) on its class structure. Finally, I offer Kautsky's observation that only those who for months and years have been exposed to hunger and the constant threat of death, know what it does to human beings to be deprived of life's necessities and to live with insecurity. He draws the conclusion that if one has seen how the prisoners experienced utter deterioration when exposed to such conditions and how quickly they regain their human qualities after liberation, once they feel assured of relative security and adequate food, one gains some inkling of what a world could be like in which every human being had absolute assurance that his life and needs would be guaranteed by the social structure instead of being endangered by it.

MAKING SLAVERY PAY

Norman Thomas

This is a book[1] which with admirable objectivity and patient scholarship deals with a subject of enormous importance to the entire world. In its early days, forced labor in the Soviet Union was officially praised or condoned as corrective in purpose. The present official policy is to conceal the facts as far as possible. It has been years since I have read or heard here in America any Communist denial of the fact of forced labor. The best that is done is to ignore it in discussions of Soviet Russia or to attempt to minimize its extent. This book makes that process impossible. It amasses and assesses a very considerable body of available evidence. It describes the various camps, their distribution, and the kind of labor done in them. It not only quotes but reproduces important documents. It gives a history of the development of forced labor. It distinguishes types of slavery and exile. It estimates the number of forced laborers at from 7 to 12 million which it calculates as at least 16% of all Soviet adult males.

There is a sickening and inevitable similarity of stories of life in concentration and forced labor camps under the Soviet dictatorship and under the Nazis. No ideology can change the fact that slavery is a crime and that the practice of it corrupts both masters and slaves. The dreadful thing is that the modern practice of slavery should have been begun by the followers of Lenin, by self-proclaimed Marxists who theoretically had believed that slave labor had been completely outgrown even by capitalism.

The authors make a strong case that the great development of forced labor has been less the result of hysterical cruelty and fear in the Kremlin which blindly seeks to punish possible opponents than of a conscious calculation of the economic value of slavery in fulfilling various five-year plans. Russia is richer in men—her own sons, prisoners of war, and probable malcontents in occupied territories—than in money or machines. Inefficient as forced labor is at certain tasks, it can profitably be employed by a completely heartless state.

Years ago, I knew a professor of ethics who was both a Christian and a socialist. He used to defend, or rather palliate, the guilt of the Christian church for its long toleration of slavery by saying that, especially under the Roman Empire, the church contributed to the downfall of slavery because at least it was strong enough to mitigate cruelty without which slavery was completely uneconomical. I shall not argue my friend's thesis. I simply point out that in the Soviet Union no sentiments of humanity interfere with this most extreme form of exploitation of the unfortunate.

One frequently hears in America the arguments, not wholly consistent, (a) that the Soviet regime was vindicated by the enthusiastic loyalty of the Russian people in the war and the complete absence of traitors; and (b) that possible sources of infection had

[1] *Forced Labor in Soviet Russia* by David J. Dallin and Boris I. Nicolaevsky. Yale University Press. New Haven, Connecticut, 1947. $3.75.

NORMAN THOMAS is a leader of the Socialist Party of the United States and chairman of the Postwar World Council. His latest book, dealing with the problem of peace in this atomic world, is entitled *Appeal to the Nations.*

been removed by Stalin's purges which were responsible for much of the supply of forced labor. Chapter 14 of our book gives in detail a very different picture. There was so much discontent with the regime whose worst crime is its use of forced labor that the Germans won over General Vlasov and thousands of soldiers to fight in their armies, apparently with little coercion. It was German cruelty which aroused Russian patriotism, and even then the regime felt compelled to fortify patriotism under the old slogan of "mercilessness." During the war they "reintroduced the very term 'katorga' (penal servitude), which had been abolished 'forever' in the first months of the Soviet regime." The nationalities of five supposedly autonomous republics or regions were judged disloyal and their inhabitants in unknown numbers swelled the ranks of exiles and slaves.

Not content with this source of supply after the war, a great many Russians—not only forced laborers in tragic Nazi camps but prisoners who had fought gallantly against the Germans—were sent into slavery. The Soviet Union did not recognize the right of its soldiers to become prisoners of the enemy; it was their business to kill themselves rather than to surrender. Therefore, an elaborate screening process was applied to all the Russians who had been taken by the Germans either as laborers under compulsion or as prisoners after gallant resistance. Here was a rich source of forced labor. One of the most moving stories in the book is related by a lieutenant of the Red Army, captured when wounded. He and all his family had been active Communists; he hated the Nazis and his hatred was increased when they sent him, wounded, into a vile forced labor camp. When he was released after the Allied victory, he was accused (since he had not shot himself) of working "voluntarily" for the Germans. He was sent to a Russian camp where the personnel had been carefully selected.

"Everyone had experience in his field," reports the lieutenant. "The organization was admirable. 'Don't spare any human beings; carry out the task according to plan.'

"The mortality was high. This was due to the lack of proper working clothes, the terrific cold, the speed-up and the competition, the bad food and the shortage of medical supplies. No distinction was made in any respect between Germans and Russians like myself. One had the impression that the destruction of human beings concentrated here must be carried out on directives from Moscow. Suicides were frequent."

The reference to Germany which supplied the Soviet dictatorship with a large part of its forced labor after the war should remind Americans of a fact on which I—not the authors—would like to comment. Our own Government, through President Roosevelt himself, approved the indefinite use under slave conditions of German prisoners of war. There is no evidence that Mr. Roosevelt so much as bargained for relatively humane conditions for the slaves. He knew or could have known how even Russians had been treated in Stalin's camps, and he must have realized how his approval of slavery for the German prisoners of war tended to bolster up the whole monstrous system.

Mr. Roosevelt also at Yalta gave indiscriminate assent to the repatriation of Russian nationals. The subsequent efforts of the State Department to reinterpret the Yalta Agreement so as to spare the unwilling—unless they

had been collaborators—were belated and only very partially effective. The complicity of the American Government in forced labor is direct.

Among the excuses for forced labor in Russia is the allegation that it is an inheritance from Czarist Russia extraneous to Communism. In their last chapter the authors present evidence that forced labor is indeed a reappearance on a larger scale of the worst practices of the old Russia, and they point out that any optimistic hope derived from a Russian return to nationalism becomes something less than rosy when nationalism is expressed in a revival of the cruelest of the Czar's customs.

The authors continue: "It is not true that the Soviet Government is discarding Communism from its philosophy and policies. Rather it sponsors, fosters, and kindles it both inside and outside of Russia by all and any means—including some that are vestiges of the past. What is fosters and kindles, however, is not the soft, lofty, and dreamy philosophy of Communism of bygone decades; it enforces a reality of unlimited coercion, of serfdom, slavery, and penal servitude.

"Nor is it true that Russian history is a sequence of murder, torture, violence, and cruelty, as it so often appears to a superficial student. Besides knouts and katorga, the history of Russia—more perhaps than that of many other nations—abounds in humanitarian and liberative movements, idealism and self-sacrifice for the cause of human liberty and the rule of law. Glorious pages of world history have been written in Russia throughout a century of struggle against the degradation and enslavement of man. For a century the aspiration of Russia's greatest thinkers was a free nation in which human rights would be secure.

"The terrible truth is that out of Russia's rich historical past the Soviet leadership, after prolonged vacillations and against opposition from within, has chosen to revive the harshest, most cruel and barbaric features, enhancing them greatly, while crushing under its heel the growths of freedom and humanism which had slowly appeared from beneath the surface during the course of the past century and which are equally a part—the noblest, proudest part—of the legacy of Russia."

This book should be in the libraries of trade unions and of all individuals who want to talk intelligently about what Communist totalitarianism really is. For myself, I could draw up a list of Americans, headed by Henry Wallace, whom I should like to invite or constrain to read this book and then see if they can answer it in any terms consistent with their defense of the Soviet Union or its satellite states as "directed democracy."